DIVERS

PRACTICAL CASES OF Conscience, Satisfactorily Resolved.

I. *Wherein should Christians be singular in their Obedience? or what may they, and must they do more than others?*

II. *What may and must a Christian be and do, that he may please God?*

III. *Whether any man is able in this life to come up to the Example of Christ in this, to do always those things that please God?*

IV. *What weakness in, and unwillingness to duties may stand with grace, and what not?*

To which are Added, some

Counsels *and* Cordials.

By *Joseph Alleine*, late Minister of the Gospel at *Taunton* in *Somersetshire*.

LONDON, Printed, and are to be sold by *Nevil Simmons* at the *Princes Arms* in St. *Paul's Church-yard*, 1678.

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CHAP. I.

The singular Duties of Christians.

I. Case of Conscience, on *Mat.* 5. 47.

What do you more than others?

Q. 1. WHerein should Christians be singular in their Obedience? Or what may they, and must they do more than others?

A. Take the Answer in these 16 *Rules* containing the Character and Compass of a Christian.

Rule I. *Heartily to love them that slight you, and to wish and seek the good of those that hate you, and seek to hurt you:* This is the very thing urged in the Text: *If you salute your brethren only, and love them that love you, do not even the Publicans the same?* Matth. 5. 44, 46. To love them that do respect and value us, this every one can do: but to love them truly that *think meanly of us*, and have prejudices and hard thoughts against us, and to speak well of them that speak evil of us, (as the sweet spirited *Calvin*) [*Let Luther call me Dog or Devil, I will say of him nevertheless, he is a precious servant of Christ Jesus.*] This is to do more than others. Thus the Martyr *Cranmer*, of whom it was a Proverb, [*Do the Bishop of* Canterbury *a displeasure, and you shall ever have him your Friend.*] Thus that Holy Man, in his much to be admired parting words, [*I had never any greater pleasure in all*

all my life than to forget and forgive injuries, and to shew kindness to them that sought evil to me.] Study who have offended you, and disobliged you, and slighted you, and keep up good thoughts of them, (if the case will bear it) and speak nothing but good of them, and think what kindness you may shew them: *pray for them, wish well to them, so shall you be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven,* Mat 5. 45.

Rule II. *To swim against the stream of the multitude*: The *dead fish* will swim *with*, but the *living against* the stream: Many will turn *Jews* when their interest will carry it in the world; when Religion is in fashion, every one will be in it: But to bear head against the current of the times, and to be for strict Godliness in all your ways, when the stream runs quite against it, to bear it down, and to resolve as *David* did, *to be yet more vile*, this is to be, and to do more than others. The *Samaritans* will needs be *Jews*, when *Alexander* favours and helps them, but when *Antiochus* bloodily rages against them, (as in the time of the *Maccabees*) then they will be none of the kin, but pretend themselves to be of another stock: (which by the way, was the reason of the deadly hatred afterward between the *Jews* and them.) But to be singular in your good choice and resolutions, with *Joshua* though all should vote against you with one consent; and with *Noah* to be *perfect in our generations*, when never so wicked and so adulterous; and *to walk with God* when all flesh have corrupted their way, and tread a contrary course; this is to do more than others. Thus the three Children (or rather the three Champions) who would not fear the flouts of the multitude, nor the frowns of the

the great ones, nor the charge of singularity, but when all the Princes, Governors, Captains, Counsellors, Sheriffs, and all the People, Nations and Languages fell down and worshipped, they stood by themselves, and would not sinfully comply, *Dan.* 3. 3, 7, 18.

Rule III. *To take most care of that which is most out of sight.* A Christians eye is most on the things least seen; first *upon his heart*, herein he doth exceed the righteousness of the *Pharisees*, whose great care was to keep all fair and clean that came to view, but looked no farther: Make great conscience of your carriage in secret, and let your main guard be upon your hearts, and this will be more than others reach to. This was *Paul*'s care to keep his conscience his inside clean and undefiled, *Act* 24 16. And *Job*'s care, that though all the world did reproach him, he might not put a reproach into the mouth of his conscience, *Job* 27. 6. and *David*'s care that his heart might be clean. 2. *Upon his hope.* Others look to the things *seen*, things in hand: but the true believer eyes his *hopes*, walks by *faith*, not by sight; And lives quite a different life from any others in the world besides: As living upon the hopes of Heaven, doth differ from living on the pleasures, profits, and honors of this world.

Rule IV. *To be merciful to others failings, and very severe to our own.* The noble Roman *Cato* could more easily forgive any than himself: To aggravate our *own evils*, and to have an *excuse* ready for our brothers; to censure our selves freely, and to come with the mantle behind us to cover our *brother*; this is to do more than others. The hypocrite is a severe censurer abroad: he is

like thy eye that can see any thing but it self: he can discern a moat in his brothers eye, but not a beam in his own. But the servant of God rebukes others with meekness, but falls out *easily* and bitterly with himself.

Rule V. *To suffer rather than to sin*; This was *Moses*'s choice: But the hypocrite's is quite contrary: he chooseth iniquity rather than affliction: To go so far with Christ as our way lies together, is to do no more than an unsound Professor may reach to: The Tryal is when Christ's interest and ours do cross; and we must either baulk our duty, or our safety and advantage. The famous Martyr under *Julian*, would not give one half-penny towards the building of the Idols Temple, though he was offered his life by the Emperor on those terms. The godly High Priest *Eleazer*, when the Nobles perswaded him to eat *other meat under colour of swines flesh*, and they would perswade the King *Antiochus* that he had eaten swines flesh, would die rather than stain his profession with the appearance of evil. When a man shall lie in outward misery and have a door of deliverance open, if he will but sin, and yet he will not accept it, as those Worthies in *Paul*'s Martyrology; this is to do more than others, *Heb.* 11. 36.

Rule VI. *To rejoyce in losses for Christ: and glory in the Cross.* When others be discouraged at the news of hardship; as that forward and seemingly resolved Disciple; or shall be offended as soon as the Sun of persecution is up. When we shall *Take pleasure in infirmities*, in *tribulations*, and *rejoyce* that we are *counted worthy* to *suffer* shame for the name of Christ; this is to do more than others. When the servants of God shall not only *patiently*, but

triumph-

triumphantly undergo the Croſſes, that crack the brains, and break the hearts of others, and ſhall ſhake off the Viper without receiving any hurt; when *Paul* and *Silas* ſhall *ſing in the ſtocks*, and the reſolved *Martyrs* ſhall embrace the Faggots, and kiſs the Stake: When the Valiant *Philpot* ſhall ſay of his Priſon [*In the judgment of the world we are in Hell, but I find in it the ſweet conſolations of Heaven,*] and the Holy *Bradford* [*My priſon is ſweeter to me than any Parlour, than any pleaſure I have had in all my life.*] This is indeed to exceed others.

Rule VII. *To be good when we ſhall be evil ſpoken of for our labour.* A *Phariſee* will do thoſe duties that will gain applauſe with men, but to take up with deſpiſed duties, diſgraceful duties, and with *David* to be religious, when it ſhall render him *Vile*; this is to do more than others. The *Philoſopher* could ſay, *It is noble indeed for a man to do well when he knows he ſhall hear ill for it.* To take up Religion when every one kicks it off: to ſtand up alone with *Luther* for the truth, when the whole world is gone a wandring after the Whore. To have his hand againſt every man, and to be for Chriſt with *Athanaſius* againſt the whole Univerſe; this is indeed to do ſome ſingular thing.

Rule VIII. *To ſtrike in with Gods intereſt when it is falling.* To join our ſelves with the Lords people when it is the weakeſt ſide: to eſpouſe their intereſt with *Moſes*, when they were in deep affliction, *Heb.* 11.25.26. To own our ſelves to be ſome of them, undauntedly, when *this way is every where ſpoken againſt*; this is to tread Antipodes to the courſe of this world.

Rule IX. *To be moſt cruel to the ſin that is naturally moſt dear.* The hypocrite hides his ſweet

morsels under his tongue: he spares as it were the fattest of the Cattel: he saith, *The Lord pardon his servant concerning this thing*: But when a man shall *off with his right hand, out with his right eye*, serve his *Absalom* as *Joab* did, when he took three darts and thrust thorow his heart; this is to do more than others. The sincere Christian is most angry with the sin of his Temper; against this he aims the arrows of all his prayers: he *keeps him from his iniquity*: he drives the whole heard of sin before him, but especially shoots at, and singles out this to run it down.

Rule X. *To live upon the divine promises when others live upon their possessions.* Others are all for what is *in hand*, with them words are but wind; they cannot live upon them: the promises are to them *a barren heath and dry breasts*: but when we make the *promises* our *heritage*, the staff of our life, the life of our hearts, when the promises are the bottle we run to in all our faintings; and while others hope in their *Wealth*, our hope is in the *Word*; this is to do more than others.

Rule XI. *To love that best, and choose it soonest, which doth cross the flesh most.* The godly mans rule *is to take the self denying side*, so he be sure it be *safe*: when others study is *to please themselves*, his is *to curb himself*: the life of others is, a *flesh pleasing*, his, a *self denying* life: others joy is, when they can *gratifie themselves*, his, when he can get *victory over himself*.

Rule XII. *To be most hot in that wherein self is least concerned. Paul* is meek as a lamb under personal injuries, 1 *Cor.* 4. 12. *Acts* 17. 16. but how is his spirit stirred when God is dishonored? A man of understanding is of a cool spirit, that is in his

his *own concern*: but *Moses* the meek waxes hot with indignation at the sight of the Calf. To be hot and forward in those duties where the flesh's interest is concerned, is to do more than a *Jehu*, 2 *Kings*. 10. 16. 30.

Rule XIII. *To make true conscience of the least sins, but most conscience of the greatest.* In one of these will the hypocrite be found tardy. It may be he will fly from open sins, and startle at gross staring sins; but of *little* sins he makes little conscience, This he allows of and connives at. Or else he will be very tender of *little things*, scruple the picking the ears of corn on the *Sabbath day*, or the curing of the sick; and strain at the gnat, when he will in other things swallow a camel, devour widdows houses. The sincere will indulge no sin; grieves for, groans under, cryes out feelingly against his very infirmities, but *most* dreads what God most hates.---

Rule XIV. *To allow your selves in the neglect of no duty, but to reserve your zeal for the duties of most weight.* To tyth mint, and cummin, and neglect judgment, mercy, and faith; to be zealous for humane Ceremonies, Ordinances, and mens Traditions, and omit the weightier matters of the Law, is right the *Pharisees* guise, *Matth.* 23. 23. *Matth.* 15. 2. To eye both the Tables, to joyn sweetly together morality and piety, to be punctual with men, but not careless of God; to give to *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsar's*, but first to give to God the things that be Gods; this is to do more than others. The sincere Christian hath respect to all Gods Commandments: walks in all his Statutes; he is throughout with God, but he is most zealous in those things that lie next the heart of Religion.

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Rule XV. *To love your Reprovers.* Herein *David* doth more than *Ahab*, see their contrary frames, 1 *Kings* 22. 8. *Psal.* 141. 5.

Rule XVI. *To subject all your worldly interest to your Makers glory*, and perform holy duties with holy ends, and while others do their best actions with carnal aims; you must do your common and civil actions with heavenly aims.

Q. *How may we know whether we be, and do more than others that are unsound?*

I shall answer this Question by propounding eight Questions to you, beseeching you to retire to the most solemn and strict examination, and make conscience to give a clear answer to these few Interrogatories, and that will resolve the Case.

Q 1. *When others do pick and choose, have you respect to all Gods Commandments?* The hypocrite may have great respect to the *comforts*, but he hath little to the *commands* of Religion: He is much for the priviledges and promises: little for the *precepts* and duties: He is partial in the Law: he will take but here and there where he likes, and where Gods commands will serve his Interest, or at least will not pinch too hard upon the flesh. The sound Christian sets all Gods commands before him: He eyes all his copy; and heartily designs and studies a throughout conformity: He hath no starting holes, nor *contrived haunts*; nor doth he halt between the Lord and *Baal*; nor serve two Masters: He doth not fear the Lord and serve other Gods; nor divides his service between God and Mammon, but he is all for uniformity and entirely

entirely devoted to Gods service, and fear alone: He hath a good conscience, willing in all things to live honestly, and doth truly, though not perfectly, forsake all his sins and keep all Gods statutes that are known to him: Let me therefore ask you two questions. (1) When others divide the Tables, do you sweetly conjoyn them in your practice? The hypocrite it may be is *just* and *square* towards men, but follow him to his family or closet, you shall find but little of God: His family is neglected, his soul is neglected: Or it may be he is a forward first Table man, but you shall find him tardy in the second: He will make *many prayers* and *long prayers*, yet make no conscience of devouring widdows houses: He is a great pretender to piety, but mean while neglects judgement, and mercy: The sincere joyn altgoether: He is so far careful of justice with men, that mean while he will not neglect the first and great part of justice, *viz.* to give God his due. He doth justly, he loves mercy, but withal walks humbly with God: He walketh *soberly*, with respect to himself *righteously* towards his neighbour, and, *godly* towards his Maker: He is not one of those that are good only on their knees, but you shall find him every where conscientious, you shall have *temperance* at his table, *chastity* and *modesty* in his behaviour, *grace* and *truth* in his works, *charity* in his deeds, *faithfulness* in his trust, *justice* in his dealings. He doth not only *seem* to be Religious, but bridleth his tongue: He is not only a *good Christian*, but *a good Neighbour*, not only *a good Man*, but a *good Husband*, a *good Master*, a *dutiful Child*, a *diligent* and *faithful Servant*, a *good Subject*. In a Word, he makes great conscience of discharging

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the duties of his relations among men.](2)When others stick in *externals*, do you look to the *spiritual* part of every command, and principally mind the inwards and vitals of Religion? Do you not only make conscience of performing duties, but do you carefully look to the *manner* of performing of them, and the *ends* for which you do perform them? Do you not only make conscience of *open*, but of *secret* sins? Do you abound above all in *secret* duties? Do you keep a watch upon your hearts, and make conscience, not only of the gross acts of sin, but even of sinful thoughts, inclinations, and desires? and are grieved even with your very infirmities and the corrupt disposition of your natures, which you cannot help though you would?...

Q. II. *When others have their reserves in closing with Christ*, do you *give up all to him entirely*? Have you taken Christ not hand over head, but deliberately, understandingly, sitting down first, and counting the cost? Have you not secret reserves for your own ease, safety, estates, esteem on some beloved sin? Have you upon solemn consideration accepted Christ as the Lord your righteousness, for better for worse, for all changes of times and conditions? to run all hazards with him, and to take your lot with him, fall as it will?

Q. III. *When others are for a little of Religion, by the by, do you make Religion your business?* Do you not put off God with the worlds leavings? and serve him when you are at leisure? Must not God stand by, while the world is first served? and are not your souls the least of your cares? and put off with some *by-scraps*, and *ends* of your time? Is Religion your Trade, & your *conversation in Heaven?*

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do you *walk with God?* or have you only now and then a turn with him? When you have ended your Prayers, is there an end of your Religion till you come to them again? or do you carry on a design of Religion throughout your whole course? have you only a list of religion at the outside of the piece? or is the woof of Religion woven into the whole cloth? into heart and life? into your discourse and trades and tables? do you *first seek the Kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof?* Is it the chief care of your lives, that God be served, and your souls be saved? and is this the one thing necessary with you, that you chiefly mind, and are most solicitous about? Do your very hearts say with *David*, *one thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after*, &c.——

Q. IV. *When others are for the wages of Religion, are you for the Work?* Can you say with *David*, *I have chosen thy Precepts?* do your hearts come off freely in this choice? Had you rather be *holy*, than otherwise, if you were at your choice? had you rather be Gods servants, and live at his command, than at your own lusts? Do you count the Laws of Christ your heritage, or rather do you not count them your bondage? do you choose not only the *wages* of righteousness, but the *work* of righteousness? Are Gods Commandments your *delight?* and are the *sweetest hours* of your lives the hours you spend with him? Do you never enjoy your selves so much as when you most enjoy God? Is his service the greatest comfort, and is it meat and drink to you to do his will, (unless when you are not your selves in the time of temptation, or desertion.) Do you make use of holy duties only as men do of Physick, when they are ill at ease,

ease, when conscience lasheth, or affliction stings, as it were, to conjure down the frightful furies? or to pacifie God, that he may not hurt you? or else do you use them as your daily bread, the very staff of your life, and means of your comforts?

Q. V. *When others are for the cheap and easie religion, are you for self-denyal?* When others are for the religion that will serve *them best*, are you for that which will serve *God best*? When others are all upon the sparing hand, and will spare what may be spared, and study how they may best save charges in going to Heaven, are you of Princely spirits, to resolve not to serve the Lord with that which will cost you nothing? Is your course of religion such as doth put your flesh to it, and cross and curb its desires; Or do you love to give it what it craves, and suffer it to take its own way? Have you no enemy you dread so much as self? Do you pamper and please it, and make provision for it? or do you pray and watch against it, and grieve for its unhappy infirmities in your actions? and had rather than all the world that this enemy were under your feet——

Q. VI. *When others are for no more of Religion than needs must, are you for the height of Religion?* The Hypocrite (as one well) is very inquisitive what is the lowest pitch that a man may have, and go to Heaven and upon this design, if he could find but this, he would look no further: but the sincere Christian, though satisfied that his state is safe, will rest in no attainments in grace; but reaches forward & presses on, if it were possible to attain to the resurrection of the dead. He that doth not *desire, and design, and endeavour perfection, never*

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yet came up to sincerity. A true believer desires holiness for holiness sake, and therefore is set upon perfecting holiness; Others desire it only for heavens sake, and therefore are only for so much as will bear their charges thither; others make use of holiness only as a bridge to Heaven, and therefore are for no more than will just serve their turn. The true believer hath a holy nature, and therefore holiness is his element & natural employment; and he must needs desire holiness in its height, because every nature reaches after perfection in its kind: The godly desires not holiness only because it is the way to Heaven, but he loves Heaven the better for the holy way that leads to it, and for the perfect holiness which is there.

And they have a false notion of Heaven in self-else they might justly desire it as the end of their present holiness, it being the fruition of God in perfect holiness.

Q. VII. *When others are all for the Salvation of Christ, are you as truly for Sanctification by Christ?* Do you take Christ as God offers him with all his offices and benefits, to be both a Prince and a Saviour, to give you repentance as well as remission of sins? Are you willing of the *dominion* of Christ, as well as *deliverance by Christ?* do you close with his burden, as well as his benefits? do you count his laws your liberty? his government, not your bondage, but your privilege? his service your freedom? Do you go in Christs ways, as in fetters or fetters? or do you run with enlargement of heart, delight or real willingness?

Q. VIII. *When others do make self their end, do you fix up God above all as your highest end?* The hypocrite doth the *same duties* with the Godly, but with

with different ends? He eats for himself, and fasts for himself, and prays with no better than self-ends, and therefore is rejected. Now is it your great design in your whole course to glorifie God and enjoy God? Do you count this your whole business and blessedness? Do you make other business to stoop to this? other interest to yield to this? Do your souls breath after this above all worldly good, that Christ may be magnified in you? Do you count your *name* and your *estate* as *loss*, and the delights of sense but *puddle water* in comparison of Christ? If Conscience give in a comfortable and clear answer to these Questions, Go in peace, Blessed are you of the Lord: God is your Friend: Heaven is your Heritage: The promises are your Portion: Christ is yours, all is yours; for he that doth these things shall never be moved; *Psal.* 15. 5.

A Necessary Case on 1 *Thes.* 4. 1.

Q. WHat may, and must a Christian be, and do, that he may please God?

A. *To your pleasing of God something is necessary as to your persons, or estates, and something as to your performances and acts.*

First, as to your *persons* or *estates*, it is necessary in general that you be in a *state of reconciliation with God*: If you would walk worthy of the Lord unto *all-pleasing*, you must first be *friends with him*: for *how can two walk together except they be agreed?* Get the controversie taken up between God and thee, and then shalt thou with *Levi*, *walk with God* in

in peace. Labour to get the breaches made up, to have the enmity slain, to have divine displeasure removed, till thy pardon be obtained, and thy peace made, nothing thou canst do will please God; he will be angry with thy person, and angry with thy prayers: What a tart Message is that to impenitent sinners, *Malach.* 1.10. God cannot take pleasure in their persons; [*I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts*] nor in any of their performances; [*neither will I accept an offering at your hand.*] He professeth that his soul had no delight in them, and tells them they are unto him *as a Vessel wherein there is no pleasure*, Gen. 22.28. It's the modest expression of that Vessel into which Nature empties it self. Come in then, and touch the golden Scepter; yield to mercy; kiss the Son, resign to Christ: accept of the peace tendred you in the Word of Reconciliation; and then God will be friends (more particularly,) that you may be in a state of Reconciliation, and so in a capacity of pleasing God, you must follow these directions.

1. *Put off every sin*: It is your iniquity that separateth between you and your God: this is the make-bate. If thou wouldst have God pleased, turn every sin out of doors, pluck it out, cast it from thee: *If thou regard iniquity in thine heart, God will not hear thee, nor regard thee*; Psal. 66.8. If thou art of them that have *pleasure in unrighteousness*, the Lord hath *no pleasure in thee.* He is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness; evil shall not dwell with him: the foolish shall not stand in his sight: he hateth all the workers of iniquity. See that thou abandon every sin that thou knowest; spare not one *Agag*; not a right eye, not an *Herodias*; for then God will not spare thee: Give the Dar-

ling of thy bosom a Bill of divorce: say to all thy Idols, *get thee hence.* God will not *look to that man* that looks pleasantly upon any sin: The jealous God will not endure to see thee hankering on the Harlots lips; embracing any sin with delight: He will not bear it, to see thee smile upon any sin: He holds thee for a Traytor to his Crown, if thou willingly harbour his Enemy: Though thou be very diligent in Gods service, and presentest him with multitude of Sacrifices, and many Prayers, he will be pleased with nothing, but hide his Face, and stop his Ears, whilst thou keepest thine iniquities in thine hands, *Isa.* 1.16, 17, 18. God will not amicably treat with them that will not put away the evil of their doings. O look into thy hands! look into thy heart! look into thy house! into thy shop! thy trade! thy calling! see if there be not some *way of wickedness*, that thou art found in. Thou canst not have peace with God, nor he pleasure in thee, till this be removed; put off therefore the Old Man with his deeds.

2. *Put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, Rom. 13.]

First. *The red Robe of his Righteousness for justification:* The Lord will never give thee a good look, nor a good word but in Christ. He is a revenging, a consuming fire out of Christ: but get on his robes and he will be well pleased. *Enoch* had this testimony that he pleased God: but Christ had much more, that God was well pleased with sinners, in and for him. Away with these rags, and with these fig-leaves. How can the righteous soul of God but abhor you, whilst in the menstruous cloaths of your own righteousness? Dare not to come to God but with Christ in your Arms: Approach him not but in the garments of your elder

Brother, lest you carry away the curse. *Joshua's* filthy garments must be put off, and Christs Rayment put on: or else there is no standing before the bright and burning eyes of infinite holiness. Put on the Lord Jesus in believing; that is accept of him in all his Offices, with all his inconveniences, and deliver up thy self to him; and this will intitle thee to his merits, and righteousness: Without this nothing will avail. If thy head were waters, and thine eyes a fountain of tears, if thou shouldst wear thy tongue to the roots with praying, if thou shouldst weep an Ocean, and wash thy self in thy own brine; all could not get out one spot: nothing can be accepted while thou art out of Christ; and therefore in the first place apply thy self to him. God will accept of no Gift but off his Altar.

Secondly, *The white Robe of his grace of Sanctification*, Rev. 5. 11. Thou that art in the *flesh*, that is, unrenewed, unsanctified, *canst not please* God, *Rom.* 8. 8. Never think to make up the matter by a little *mending* and *reforming* particular Acts: Man, thy *heart* must be *renewed*, thy state must be *clean altered*, or God cannot be pleased, *Matth.* 7. 16, 17, 18. The Tree must be made *good*, the Fountain must be healed, or else the stream will be salt and the fruit sower. If Christ be once formed in thee, that is, his image in his grace! Likeness is the ground of Love: Similitude and suitableness of nature, is the loadstone of affection. God cannot but love his own likeness: wouldst thou have his Favour? wouldst thou be his Delight? Then conform to his pleasure, study to be like him, purifie thy self as he is pure. The righteous Lord loveth righteousness: he desireth

truth in the inward parts, and takes infinite complacency in the graces of his people. These are the Spikenard and the Saffron, the Spices, the Beds of Lillies; the sweet Oyntments that Christ is so taken up with: These are the Cinamon and the Trees of Frankincense; the Calamus and the Camphire; the Myrrhe and the Aloes; the Chains of the neck, and the precious Pearls that he is so ravished withal, and doth so superlatively commend, *Cant.* 4.9. This is the Rayment of Needlework and Gold of *Ophir*, wherein the Queen is presented to her Royal Husband, *Psal.* 45. 9, 13. Therefore as the Elect of God holy and beloved, *Col.* 3. 12, 13. Put ye on *bowels of mercy, kindness*, put off all *these, anger, wrath, malice, filthy communication, and put on the new Man*, Col. 3 9, 10 Particularly, let me commend to you some special graces which God doth manifest himself to be wonderfully pleased with al. As ever you would please God get on these:

1. *Be cloathed with Humility*, 1 Pet. 5. 5. This is a Garment which must be put on, or else you cannot be accepted or saved, *Matth.* 18. 3. Here is the dress that you must come to God in. He must be *served in Humility of mind*, Acts 20. 14. You must humble your selves to walk with him, *Mich.* 6. 8. Humility is a plain, but yet a comely garment. This grace doth eminently honour God; and therefore God doth put a peculiar honour upon, and manifest a most special delight in this. Of all the men in the world, this is the man that God will look unto; even he that is poor and of a contrite spirit, that trembleth at his Word, *Isa.* 66. 2. Though he be the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth Eternity, whose Name is Holy, (from whence

whence the trembling soul is ready to conclude, that surely such a fearful Majesty cannot but despise him; such sin-hating purity cannot but abhor him; yet he will lay (*Isa.* 47.15.) aside his Majesty and bear with mans impurity, and condescend to most familiar and constant communion and cohabitation with his poor dust, when contrite at his feet, and prostrate in humility. If thou wouldest be accepted of God, come as *Benhadads* servants to the King of *Israel*, with a rope about thy neck, and ashes on thy head, 1 *King.* 20. 32. think meanly of thy self, and God will honour thee, 1 *Sam.* 2.30. Put thy self in the lowest rooms, and God will set thee higher. Be little in thine own eyes, and thou shalt be high in his. A proud heart and a proud look is with God the first-born of abomination; As ever thou wouldst have God well-pleased with thee, be throughly displeased with thy self: If thou dost throughly loath thy self, God doth love thee: If thou abhorrest thy self, God delighteth in thee. Be angry with thy self, and the Almighty will turn away his anger from thee: Condemn thy self, and God will acquit thee. In no wise extenuate thy sins, nor justifie thy self. Think the worse of thy self, and be willing that others should think meanly of thee, and heartily love them that slight thee. This is the frame in which God is well-pleased: pass sentence on thy self, and God will absolve thee: Set thy self at his foot-stool, and he will lift thee up into the Throne, *Rev.* 2.

II. *Labour for sincerity:* This is not a distinct grace from the rest, yet for Doctrines sake I speak to it distinctly. *Uprightness* is the great thing that God looks after, and covenants for, *Gen.* 17.1.

It renders all our persons and performances acceptable before God, *Prov.* 15.8. Such as are upright in the way are Gods delight, *Prov.* 11. 20. To these are all the promises of peace, Salvation, Pardon, Preservation, Blessedness, *Psal.*87. 10. In a word, there is *no good thing* God *will withhold from them that walk uprightly*, *Prov.*28. 10. This was *Noah's* praise, that *he was upright in his generation*: This was that set off *Job* at such a rate that God doth so extol him for, and as it were make his boast of him; the singular sincerity and integrity of his heart. Study to be upright: See that the main bent of your hearts be to please God, and honour him: That God's interest be uppermost with you: That he hath the chief share in you, and the eye of the soul be principally to him; for in this sincerity doth consist, as to your main state. Let your great care be of your hearts: Here is a Christians great work. The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh to the heart: see therefore that thou look to it: Let thine eye be chiefly there where God's eye is: He looketh not so much what thou dost, as with what a heart: Go then and do likewise, yet be not satisfied in this, that you are upright as to your states, but labour to approve your selves in uprightness to God in your particular actions: Do common, as well as spiritual actions with holy ends: Much of our lives are lost for want of this: So much as is done for God, of his strange grace he accounts himself our debtor. But what *is done* for no higher end than *self*, is lost from our account.

III. *Put on a spirit of zeal and activity.* How won-

wonderfully is God pleased with *Phineas* zeal *Numb.*25. 11,12,13. What a great approbation doth he manifest of him? What an attestation doth he give to him? he is so greatly pleased with his zealous appearance for him, that he turns away his displeasure from the whole congregation of *Israel*, and overlooks their crimson provocations against him. On the contrary, there is nothing that God is more displeased with than the remisness, and lifelesness, and indifferency in Religion. The luke-warm water is not a greater offence to the stomach, than the luke-warm Professor is to God; and therefore he will spue such a one out of his mouth, *Rev.* 3.16. Christians, where is your zeal for the Lord of Hosts? Christs redeemed must be zealous of good works: *Tit.* 2. 14. not sloathful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, *Acts* 18. 25. *Rom.* 12. 11. *Acts* 26. 6, 7. instantly night and day for the hope of the promise: do not only that which is right in the sight of the Lord, but do it with all your heart: The Lord loveth a willing servant: Bestir your selves for the Lord. Be ye followers of Christ who went up and down doing good. Every Christian should be a common blessing. A publick good. This is to be the children of your Father which is in Heaven, who is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works: And be sure the Father doth best love that child that is most like him: A private narrow spirit is a low and a base spirit; unworthy of a Christian. A Catholick communicative spirit, full of great desires, and great designs. A large heart, set upon doing good, whose fire though ever hotest within, will be breaking forth of his breast and provoking

others: whoſe love will not be *confined to a party*; but gladly and thankfully owneth Chriſt where-ever he ſees him. This *Catholick ſpirit*, I ſay, is the *glory of Religion*; the *Churches bleſſing*, and *Gods delight*.

IV. *Live by faith*, Heb. 10. 38. This is a pre-cious grace in Gods account, 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. It giveth glory to God; and therefore God taketh no ſmall pleaſure in it. By faith *Enoch* ob-tains that teſtimony that he *pleaſed* God, *Rom.* 4. 26. *Heb.* 11. 5. 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. *Heb.* 11. 39. *Mat.* 8. 10. If you would ſo walk as to pleaſe God, you muſt walk by faith. Chriſtians muſt look to the things unſeen; they muſt not live at the common rate: Chriſt muſt be their life and breath, their prayers and their promiſes, their daily bread. By faith did the Elders obtain that good report: 'twas faith that Chriſt was ſo greatly taken with in the Centurion, which made him to commend him for a *None ſuch*. This was that which won ſuch a ſingular praiſe and approba-tion from our Saviour to the woman of *Canaan*; even her victorious faith, *Matth.* 15. 28. Thou haſt taken away my heart, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe, thou haſt taken away my heart with one of thine eyes, *Cant.* 4. 9. that is, with thy *faith*. Live in the power of faith, and thou wilt pleaſe him to the heart: Give glory to him by believing. Let the life thou now liveſt in the fleſh be by faith of the Son of God: Faith, as one well ſays, is the navel of mortality.

Live by faith in *proſperity*; though thou haſt the world about thee, let it not be above thee; keep it at thy feet, uſe it as thy ſervant: Be much in the views of glory, and contemplation

of

of Eternity: Buy as though thou poſſeſſeſt not, rejoyce as though thou rejoyceſt not, love as though thou loveſt not, uſe this world as not abuſing it; it is but a *faſhion*, not a *ſubſtance*, and that which it is paſſeth away, 1 *Cor.* 7. 30, 31. Uſe it therefore with mortified affections, and prove the ſincerity of your faith by the victory over your inordinate content and delight in, and deſires after, and cares for the things of this world, 1 *John* 5. 4.

Live by *faith in adverſity*: Weep as though you wept not; enduring the croſs and deſpiſing the ſhame, as looking unto Jeſus, *Heb.* 12. 2. *Heb.* 11. 26. accounting Chriſts reproaches your riches, his ſhame your glory, *Act.* 5. 41. Compare theſe light afflictions with the weight of glory, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. *Rom.* 8. 18. Ply your hearts with the Promiſes. Count if you can the riches that are laid up in them. Roll your ſelves upon the Lord, *Pſal.* 37. 5. and know that your heavenly Father hath no greater delight, than to ſee his Children truſt him with confidence, when all viſible helps are out of ſight, and he ſeems to be their enemy, *Job* 13. 15.

V. *Put on the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit, this is in the ſight of God a great price.* Study to be (1 *Pet.* 3. 4.) like your Father, ſlow to anger, ready to forgive, *Pſal.* 130. 1, 8. forgetting injuries, loving enemies, requiting ill will with kindneſs, ill words with courteſies, neglects with benefits; and if any wrong you do him a kindneſs the ſooner: ſo ſhall you bear his likeneſs and be his delight. And know ye that are of unmortified paſſions, and unbridled tongues, God hath an eſpecial hatred and diſpleaſure againſt, a *froward*

heart,

heart, and a *froward tongue*, *Prov.* 3. 32. 11. 20. 1. 12. 8. 12. Oh seek meekness: How can the holy Dove rest in a wrathful heart. Christ is a Lamb of meekness: how can he take pleasure in an unquiet contentious spirit: Verily with the froward he will shew himself froward, *Psal.* 18. 26. If you will not forgive others, he will not forgive you. Art thou hard to be pleased, a froward wife, a froward master, a cross and wilful servant? surely God will not be pleased with thee: he will meet to you as you measure to others, *Matth.* 16. 24.

VI. *Get a spirit of self-denyal.* God is then pleased best when self is displeased most: When we can be content to be empty: content to be abased, that God might be honoured, and with the Holy Baptist, are willing to be eclipsed by Christ; willing to decrease that he may increase: counting our selves no losers whilst his interest is a gainer: *John* 3. 29, 30. rejoycing that we are made low for Christs advancement: This is well-pleasing unto God: How greatly was he pleased with *Solomon*'s self-denying choice, and gives him his asking, throwing in riches, and honour into the bargain? 1 *Kings* 3. 10, 11, 12. Strange was *Abraham*'s self-denial: What! to sacrifice with his own hand, the whole hope of his Family! the Heir of Promise! the Child of his Years! a Son! an only Son! when his life was bound up in the lads life! Was ever mortal thus put to it? But *Abraham* shall not be a loser. God gives him a testimony from Heaven: blesses him, blesses his Seed: blesses all Nations in him, *Gen.* 22. 15, 16, 17, 18. Wonderful was *Moses his self-denial*; but more wonderful was his acceptation and reward,

ward, *Heb.* 11. 24. none like *Moses*, *Deut.* 34. 10. God preferred him in another manner than *Pharaoh* could. He must speak with him face to face, as a man with his friend: His word shall be as it were a Law with God; Speak for whom he will, they shall be spared though they seem'd to be devoted to destruction. But speak against him who durst, he shall be sure to bear his iniquity. *Num.* 12. 8. Forget self: Renounce thine own wisdom; thine own worthiness; thine own will: Bite in thy passions: Curb thine appetite: Bridle thy tongue: This do, and thou shalt be greatly accepted: and shalt find that Gods favour will infinitely reward thee, for all the murmuring oppositions and discontents of thy flesh, which will be ready to be impatient to have the reins held so hard.

VII. *Maintain a spirit of resolution and constancy in the ways of God*, Heb. 10. 38. This was the renown of the three Worthies, *Dan.* 3. They feared not the fierceness of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s rage, nor the fire of the furnace: all the world could not make them bow: and how gloriously did God own them, and miraculously evidence his pleasure in them: Stand your ground: Resolve to live and die by substantial godliness: cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart: Let no difficulties make you change your station: then shall you be an honour and a pleasure to the God that made you.

Well then, would you know what frame of heart is pleasing to God? why this *humble, sincere, zealous, active frame*, this *believing, meek, self-denying, resolved* frame; this is the frame that is well pleasing in the sight of God?

Secondly, *As to your performances*, more briefly that

that those may please God, you must heedfully look to these five things.

1. *That they be done by the right Rule*; which is *Gods Word*; You must not follow the imaginations of your own hearts, *Numb.* 15. 39. you must not do that which is right in your own eyes: In all sacred actions you must have Gods command to warrant you. You may not offer to God of that, of which you are not able to say, *Thou requirest these things at our hands*, Isa. 1. 12. In all civil actions you must have Gods allowance. Be sure he will never accept that which his Word condemns; under pain of Gods displeasure, dare not to set your hands to what the *Word forbids*.

2. *That they be done to the right ends*, which is, Gods glory: How damnably did the Pharisees erre? How miserably did *Jehu* miscarry? and both in acts, for the *matter commanded*, for want of aiming at this end.

3. *That they proceed from right Principles*. (1) *Faith*, without which, it is impossible to please God: Prayer will not avail except it be the Prayer of Faith, *Heb.* 11. 6. We believe, and therefore we speak, (2) *Love*: If we should give our goods to the poor, and bodies to the fire, and not from Love, it would profit us nothing: where the slavish fear of hell only, or of the lashes of conscience, or the love of mans praise, carries men to duties; or where any other carnal principle is *predominant* in the act, it cannot please God. (3) *Fear*: we cannot serve God *acceptably*, without *reverence and godly* fear (no *slavish* fear.) The Lord *taketh pleasure in them that fear him*, in them that hope in his *mercy*. Observe the happy mixture, where these two are conjoyned; that is, a

true

true filial fear. Saith *David*, *I will come to thy House in the multitude of thy mercy*, (Behold his *faith*) *and in thy fear will I worship towards thy holy Temple* (there is his *fear*, with faith;) *Faith without fear* were bold presumption: Fear without faith is sinful despair: joyn them together and God is well-pleased.

4. *That they be done in a right manner*: *Preparedly*, not *rashly* and inconsiderately in the presence of so dreadful a Majesty; *prudently*, for lawful Acts may be spoiled, and be done unlawfully without consideration had to the offence that may (in some cases) attend them; yea holy Duties as well as common Actions may be turned into sins, by being ill-timed, and for want of a due *attending* the present circumstances: *Holily*, not rashly, uttering any thing with our mouths before God; but behaving our selves as in his sight: Heartily, not feignedly: with our lips going, when our minds are gadding.

That they be directed through the right means, that is, Jesus Christ the only way to the Father: Bring all thy Sacrifices to the High Priest, offer all upon this Alter, else all is lost: not that it is enough to say (*Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen*) at the end; but in every duty you must come with lively dependance on him for righteousness and strength, for assistance and acceptance. Remember to do *all in the Name of the Lord Jesus*, to come leaning upon his hand, without this all your services will be rejected at last.

The

CHAP. II.

A third Case of Conscience grounded upon the words of our Saviour.

John 8.29. *For I do always those things that please him.*

Q. I. *IS any man able in this life to come up to the Example of Christ in this, To do always those things that please God?*

Anſ. In regard there is none that doth good and ſinneth not, and God is not, nor can be pleaſed with ſin, no not in his own people, but moſt of all hates it in them; it cannot be that any man in this life ſhould *fully* come up to Chriſts Example in this: yet may we come ſo far on towards it, as that not only in our immediate addreſſes to God, but in the general courſe of our lives, we may come to *pleaſe God*. Thus *Enoch and Noah walked with God*, i. e. in their general courſe they walked ſo as to *pleaſe God*, and approve themſelves in his ſight. Thus the meaneſt of Action, if done by us as unto the Lord, as the Servants of Chriſt, have a promiſe of acceptance and reward, *Col.* 3.22, 23, 24.

Q. II. How may we come in our meaſure to be followers of Chriſt in this, to do always thoſe things that *pleaſe God*?

Anſw. *In order to this, there is ſomething neceſſary, with*

with reference, 1. *To our Persons*: 2. *To our Principles*: 3. *To our Practices, with reference to our Persons*: and here it is necessary. 1. That there be an alteration of *our natures* by *renewing grace*: for *they that are in the flesh cannot please God*, Rom. 8. 8.

These *wild Vines* must needs bring forth *sowre grapes*, *Isa.* 5. 4. The fruit that they bear (how specious and fair soever to the eye) is *evil fruit*, *Matth.* 7. 17. Where there is not a *good treasure* of grace in the *heart*, a man cannot in his actions *bring forth good things*, Mat. 12. 36.

Many enlightned sinners think by reading, and praying; forsaking some conscience-wasting sins, to pacifie God, and set all right: Mistaken souls, let me undeceive you: you begin at the wrong end, your first and greatest care must be, to get *your hearts and natures changed and renewed by the power of converting grace*: you labour in vain at the streams, while the fountain of corruption in the heart remains in its strength. You must not think it is with you as it is with a ruinous house, where the mending of here and there a little will make up all again; but the old building must be quite taken down, and the foundation stone laid anew, in a *sound repentance from dead works*, and *through conversion unto God*. Till this be done you must know that God hath *no pleasure in you*, neither will accept an offering at your hand, *Mal.* 1. 10. as he doth from those that are his friends.

2. *That there be the Acceptation of your persons through faith in Christ Jesus*: For in him alone it is that God will be well pleased. *Matth.* 3. last. So that *without faith*, interessing us in him, *it is impossible to please God*, Heb. 11. 6.

For

For the better understanding both these Particulars, know that there are two Attributes of God to which you must bear a conformity, or else you cannot please him.

1. *The holiness of God*: for he is not a God that hath pleasure in iniquity; He heareth no sinners: The foolish shall not stand in his sight: He hateth all the workers of iniquity, *Psal.* 5. 4, 5. *Joh.* 9. 31. God can no more take pleasure in the unsanctified, than we in swine or serpents.

2. *The Justice of God*: for he will by no means clear the guilty, *Exod.* 34. 7. Could we have inherent holiness in us in our unpardoned state, yet *justice* could not but be infinitely offended while guilt lieth unremoved; as you may see in Christ. For though he were *perfectly holy*, yet being under the guilt of our sins imputed to him, the severity of Gods justice broke out against him.

Now man being naturally an offence both to the *holiness* and *justice* of God, there must of necessity pass upon him in order to his *pleasing God*, this twofold change.

1. The *real change of Sanctification*: I call this a real change, because by this there is a real change, infusing of new qualities and dispositions, making him of proud humble, of carnal spiritual, and heavenly, *&c.*

2. The *relative change of Justification*; I call this a *relative change*, because this is not a change *in a mans nature*, but in his *condition*, making him to stand in a new relation to the *Law*, with reference to which he was before guilty and condemned: but now the Law pronounces the same man clear and acquitted; and this is not for any righteousness *infused* into him, but for the *satisfaction*

and

and *payment* of another laid down for him: satisfaction there must be, and a righteousness must be tendred, or else God cannot be at peace. We have *nothing to pay*, *Luke* 7. 49. Oh sinner! away to Christ for it, Hide thee in the Clifts of that Rock; Run to the Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. Appear not before God but in the Robes of Christs Righteousness. He sends you to Jesus as he did them to *Job*, Chap. 42. the last: *Go to my servant* Job, *he shall pray for you, him will I accept*: Get out of your selves: fly to Christ, labour to be found in him; else all your endeavours in rinsing and washing your selves will be to no effect.

9. *With reference to our Principles.* And here it is necessary that some *corrupt Principles* be *unlearnt*, and some *holy Principles* be *received* and retained.

Some *corrupt Principles* must be *unlearned*. As 1. That *it is enough if we serve God on the Lords day, and we may serve our selves all the rest of the Week*. Though God hath reserved one Day in seven wholly for his immediate service, which is therefore in a peculiar sense called the Lords day, yet we must know that *every day* is his, and that He hath not allowed us one hour nor inch of time, but only for his service. Indeed he hath service of *more sorts than one*: but we must know that the business of our ordinary affairs, if rightly done, is a *serving of the Lord Christ*, Col. 3. 24. God is as truly served by you in the *working* days labour as the *Sabbath days rest*, if you do it in a right manner, and to holy ends.

There are a generation whose Religion is but a *Sundays Religion*, which they put on and off

with their Sundays Cloaths; and then they think God is fairly served for the week: although God knows, that little they do then, is but poorly done neither. Never think God will accept it at thy hands, when thou liveſt ſix days to the world and thy ſelf, for *him* that thou ſpendeſt for him. This ſhews thee to be under the unmortified power of ſelf-love, and not to be the Lords: for none of *his*, liveth to *himſelf*, *Rom.* 14. 7. You muſt remember that you are but to *learn*, upon the *Sabbath*, how to ſerve God all the *week*, and not think when the Lords day is ended his work is done.

2. *That if God be ſerved morning and evening it is enough*, though we ſerve our ſelves the reſt of the day. God muſt be ſerved *every day* and *all the day*, *Prov.* 23. 17. You muſt be ſerving him, not onely in your *Feaſts*, but at your *Meals*; not onely on your *Knees*, but in your *Callings*.

Some think that if they keep up *religious duties* they may do what they liſt at other times: that if they be *intemperate*, *laſcivious*, *unrighteous*, it is but to make even again with God at night, and all will be well. Like the whore in the *Proverbs*, that having made her offering, was preſently ready for new wickedneſs, *Prov.* 7. 14. as if ſhe had paid off the old ſcore, and might now boldly run upon a new. Theſe are not the Children of God, but of *Belial*.

Others think that though they may not ſerve the *Devil* at any time, yet giving God his dues *morning and evening*, they may *ſerve themſelves* the reſt of the time. But in vain do they lay claim to God, who live more to themſelves than they do

to

to him. This will be found horrible sacriledge to put off God but with the tenth. God is to be eyed, and served in all that you do; and this is that I drive at, that we may not *divide our selves* between God and the world; between his service and our own ends, and so put off him with a partial service; but that we may do all in obedience to him, and we may be *intirely* the Lords. That he *in all things may be glorified by us*, and we may not *lose our Reward.*

2. Some holy Principles must be received and retained. As

Pr. 1. *That the pleasing of God is our only Business, and our highest Blessedness.* First our *only Business*: what is it that we call or count our *Business?* 1. That is a mans *Business* which his *livelihood* and *subsistance* depend upon. The *Lawyer* counts the *Law* his *Business*: And the *Tradesman* counts his *Trade* his *Business*; because upon this their *livelihood* and *subsistance* depends: Brethren, our *whole* depends upon the *pleasing of God*: Do this and do all: miss in this, and you mark all: please him and you are made for ever: if he be not pleased you are undone for ever. How careful is the *selfish* Courtier to please his Prince? how will he crouch and flatter? and if he can but divine what will gratifie and please him, he thinks himself happy: And why? but because all his *dependance* is upon his Princes favour: Much more do we depend upon the favour of God. Blessed is the man *whom he chooseth*, Psal 65 4. *In his favour is life*, Psal. 30. 5. But wo to them that have God against them: these are perfectly miserable: *Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them*, Jer. 6. 30. If the

Lord do but say to a man as he did to *Moses*, *Thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.* Happy is that man. But if he thus say, *I have no pleasure in thee*, you may cover the face of that man, as they did *Hamans*, and carry him away: miserable must his end be if he so continue.

2. *That is a mans business which he hath his Stock and Talents for*: If a man be entrusted as a Steward or a Factor, his *Business* is to buy in the Commodities that are useful. Beloved, all our Time, Parts, Interests, Food, Rayment, and whatever Mercies Spiritual or Temporal, are the Stock wherewith God hath entrusted us, and all for his own use and service: And it is not a sad and fearful case, that God should have so great a Stock going, as lies in the hands of all the Sons of Men, and yet have, (if I may so speak) so little profit of it? I mean so little glory by it: That he should sow so much and reap so little; strew so much and gather so little? Is it not sad that men should have so much in vain? Hast thou health or wealth and doth not use it for God? it is all in vain, hast thou understanding, and yet improvest it but for contriving thine own affairs, and worldly designs? thy reason and understanding are become vain. Oh how wilt thou answer it, that thou hast had so great a stock in thine hands, and made so little improvement of it? It had been good for some men if they had never had a foot of Land, or an hours ease, if they had never had the understanding of men, because they have not used their Talents for God, and for the ends for which they were put into their hands.

3. *That is a mans Business which his capacities do call for*: It is a mans *Business* if in the capacity of

of a *Judg*, to do justice; or of a Servant to do his Masters will. Brethren, all your *capacities* do evidence it to be your *business to please God*: you are his *Friends*, you are his *Servants*, therefore must *please him well in all things*, Titus 2. 9. His *Children*, And therefore must set your selves to *honour him*, Malach. 1. 6. his *Spouse*, and therefore it is your *business to please your Husband*, 1 Cor. 7. 34.

4. *That is a mans Business which he hath his maintenance for*: If a man be maintained in the place of a School-master, it is his Business to teach: if of a *Soldier*, it is his Business to fight. Beloved, do you not know at whose *finding* you are? And do you think God keeps so many servants to be idle, or to mind their own designs and pleasures? God hath cut you out every one his work: every man his hands full: So much work is to be done *within door*, and so much *without door*; so much *towards God*, *towards your Neighbour*, *towards your own selves*: that you have no time to be idle in. And you shall dearly reckon for it, if you will eat his Bread and will not do his work: And as pleasing God is our chiefest Business,

Secondly, So it is also our *highest Blessedness*: For mans *happiness* lies in *Gods favour*, Psal. 4. 6. Our happiness is in attaining the *end of our being*, and therefore the great Query amongst the Philosophers still was, *What was the end, or the happiness of man*. Now the *true end* of our Being is, that we may *please God: for his pleasure we are and were created*, Rev. 4 11. And for this end also we were *new created*, that we should yield our selves unto God, *Rom* 6. 13. and being *built up a spiritual house, should offer up to him spiritual sa-*

crifice acceptable through Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 5. This is the end of your *Redemption*, that we should serve not *our selves, but him* in *holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives*, Luke 1. 75. And *that we should not henceforth live to our selves, but to him that died for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 15. 'Tis the end likewise of our *Justification*, that our *consciences* being purged, we should *acceptably* serve the living God. In a word, 'tis the end of our *Glorification*, that being translated into *Heaven* we should *perfectly please* God, and serve him *night and day in his Temple*, Rev. 7. 15. and 22. 3. So that the *pleasing of God*, is the *whole end*, or *whole happiness of Man*, Eccl. 12. 13. And this will be clear, because *We do then promote our selves most when we please God best*: For by this you shall have this two-fold advantage.

First, *You shall be the favourites of God.* O glorious promotion! *Haman* thought himself no little man when he was on *Ahasuerus* right hand; and yet he was at length but preferred to the Gallows, *Esther* 5. 11. and 7. 10. But what shall be done to the man whom God delights to honour? Oh blessed is that man! wo to him that toucheth him: *It had been better for him that a milstone had been hanged about his neck, and he drowned in the midst of the Sea*, than that he should offend such a one, *Luke* 17. 2. God is infinitely chary of his favourites. The apple of his eye is touched when they are injured, *Zacharia* 2. 8. *Whosoever toucheth them shall not be innocent*, Psal. 107. 15. God hath a blessing for those that shew them a kindness, *Gen.* 12. 3. He will render vengeance upon the ungodly for every *hard speech* they utter against them, *Jude* 15.

O man, doth not thy soul say, *Happy is the people that is in such a case*: will not thy condition be most Blessed, when God shall be thus infinitely tender of thee, to take all the kindnesses done to thee, as done to himself? *Matth.* 25. 45. and all the injuries done to thee, as affronts to himself? *Acts* 9. 4. This is the happy Case of his Favourites.

Secondly, *Every thing you do shall be found upon your account with God.* Brethren, are you Believers, or are you not? Do you believe the Immortality of the Soul, and the Life to come, or do you not: The ways of the most do declare them to be real Infidels, though professed Christians. If you think there be an eternal State to come, will it not be your highest wisdom to be providing for it, and laying up what possibly you can, that you may inherit it in the other world? Will not every wise man that knows he is shortly to be removed into another Country, be careful to transport all that he can, that he may enjoy it at his coming? Beloved, if you do believe indeed that you must be for ever in another world, will it not be your best course to be doing that, the fruit whereof you shall enjoy for ever? Were not he a mad man that having but a very short term upon a Living, should yet go to building and planting there, when he had Land of Inheritance to build upon? Infinite is the mischief that comes of *self-seeking* and *self-pleasing*. You are *eternal* losers by it: God will say, *you have your reward*, Matth. 6. 5. Something you may have in hand, but the *eternal reward* is lost. Brethren, I am ambitious for you, that what you do, you should do for ever; that all you do should meet you in the other world, and

that there you should reap the everlasting fruit of what you are doing now. A wise Builder will build for ever, and not only that which shall last for a day, or for a year. O that you would be wise Builders! Do all for God, and you shall have eternal advantage. Learn but this Lesson, *To set your selves in all things to please God, and you will be promoting and advancing your selves in all that ever you do*, always laying up a treasure in Heaven, still adding to the heap. And O what riches will you come to, when by every day, and every hour, and every action you are gainers? For God will not let the least thing that is done for him, no not a Cup of cold Water go without an everlasting reward, *Matth* 10. 42. nor your labour be in vain, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58.

Pr. 3. *That when you have done all, if God be not pleased, you have done nothing.* Settle it upon your hearts, That all is in vain that is not done for God: when you do not *please God*, you do not profit your selves. When men offer never so richly, and freely, if not in such a manner as is *pleasing to God*, all is but a vain oblation, *Isa.* 1. 13. If men will do more than *ever* God *required*, and be zealous in things that God hath not *commanded*, it is but *in vain that they worship Him*, Mat. 15. 9. Beloved, so much time as you have lived to your selves, you have lived in vain; because it was quite besides your end. O it is a heart-cutting consideration to a tender Christian to think of this; that when his life is so short, and time so little in all, yet he must be fain to cut off so much! why man so many hours must thou cut off from thy days, and so many years from thy life, as thou hast lived not to God, but to thy self; They are all lost as to the

the ends of life and time. If on Repentance thou be forgiven, thou art not *Rewarded* for them.

Beloved, You must count that you have lived no longer than you have *lived unto God*, Phil. 1. 21. *To me to live is Christ.* I should account I did *not live*, if I did not live to him: 'Tis the only employment of my life to serve Him. I should not tell what to do with my life, unless it were to spend it for Him.

Christian, Thus thou must reckon; so much time as I have lived to Christ, so much have I lived; and so much as I have lived to my self, so much I have lost. 'Tis not the *Man* but the *Beast* that lives, while we live below our reason, which distinguishes the *Humane life* from that of *Bruits*. Now while we live not to God, we live utterly below our *reason it self*; which is sufficiently discovered, in that God is the Author and End of Man. Doth not *Reason* dictate that God should have the glory of his *own work*, and the Vessel should be to the Potters use? Doth any plant a Vineyard, or keep a Flock, and not expect the Fruit or the Milk? 1 *Cor.* 9. 7. God hath made thee, O man, *for himself*, Prov. 16. 4. And hast thou the face of a man, and dost not blush at this to think that God should make and maintain thee in vain? If thou hast one grain of ingenuity, thou wilt abhor the thought of this, that thou shouldest *be in vain*. Why, so much as thou art for thy self thou art for nothing. It may be thou livest a very busie life: but if thou actest not for *God*, thou art all this while but busily doing nothing. Thou mayst sit down in the Evening, and say, I have been all this day doing nothing. Thou wilt find

a blank in Gods Book for that day, nothing upon thine account: on this sad record, such a day spent and nothing done: God hath his Day book and takes notice of all your carriages, how you rise and how you go forth to your labours; how you speak, how you eat, and whether you eye him and his glory in all, or look no higher than your selves, *Luke* 5. 5. *We have been toyling all night, and caught nothing.* May not this be the sad complaint of many a man? I have been toyling all my life, and yet I have done nothing; because what I did was not done unto the Lord. How would you take it of your servants, if coming home in the evening, you should find every one of them minding their own business, and pleasure, and your work left undone? Is it not sad, Sirs, that so many hours and days should pass over us, and we no nearer our end than ever we were before? Your little *Children* are busie from morning to night, and yet all the while have been doing nothing: And so are *you* when you are but seeking your carnal selves, and not serving and pleasing God in what you undertake.

Pr. 4. *That the favour of all the world can nothing stead you if God be not pleased with you, and by you.* If there were any that could save you from his wrath, you need not be so solicitous to *please him*: but if he be not pleased we are all undone. *Thou, even thou art to be feared, and who shall stand when once thou art angry?* Psal. 76. 7. Isa. 43. 13. When men have slight thoughts of Gods anger, and the fear and dread of him is not upon their hearts, no wonder if they be not careful to *please him*; you must be convinced, that the *displeasure* of God is the most formidable thing in the world, or else

you

you will never learn this great Lesson. Beloved, if you should please men, & all the world should be on your side, what would this avail while *God* is your enemy? If all men should bless you and speak well of you, what would this profit, when God should rise up in judgment against you and condemn you? It is not at mans Bar, but Gods, that you must stand: It is not at mens Votes that you must be cast or quitted. It will not go by most voices, but God himself is the Judge, *Ps.* 75. 7. In *his Breast* it is whether you shall live or die. If a man were upon a tryal for his life, what would it avail him that all his fellow prisoners, and the whole crowd about him were for him, when the whole Bench and Jury were against him? If your Lives and Estates were in question, to whom would you go to make your friend? the *Judg* or the *People*? Sirs, be convinced that if God be against you, 'tis as bad as if God and all the world were against you. For all signifies *nothing* without him. Oh, whatever you do, study to get in and keep in with him. I tell you, the time is coming when the breath of men will signifie nothing; when their Commendation will do you no good. O man! though all the world should give thee their hands, and subscribe thy Certificate, it would signifie nothing in Gods account, or his Court. Many build their hopes for Heav'n upon the good opinion that others have of them. But I tell thee man though thou couldst carry Letters of commendation with thee when thou diest, and all the Ministers of the Gospel should give thee their *Bene discessit*, all would be no more than a blank paper, and he would not save thee a jot the sooner, if he should find thee to have been but a se-

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cret Hypocrite, a rotten-hearted Professor all the while.

Pr. 5. *That God would not be pleased with you in any thing, except you make it your care to please Him well in every thing.* You will be one day *ashamed*, except you have *respect to all Gods Commandments*, Psal. 119.6. you have not a *good conscience*, except it be your care *in all things to live honestly*, Heb. 13.18. If *Naaman* must be excused *in one thing*, to bow in the house of *Rimmon*, that he might not displease his master, this is enough to spoil every thing, 2 *King* 5. 18. Some will needs keep Gods good will and the worlds too, and so will give both their turns; They will serve God at home, and conform to the world abroad; and it shall be a great thing indeed that they will not swallow, rather than lose the good will of men, especially great men. These men have two Faces, and two Tongues; the one for the good, and the other for the bad company that they come into. Some held two *First Principles*, the one the common fountain of all good (which is God,) and the other the cause of all evil, and they worshipped both the *good Principles* for *love*, and the *evil for fear*: Just such a Religion are many among us now of. But let them know whoever they are, that while they grasp all, they lose all: For God will never own Time-servers, nor Men-pleasers for the Servants of Christ, *Ephes.* 6. 6. *Gal.* 1. 10.

3. *With reference to your practices.* And here as ever you desire to come up to this blessed life of *doing always those things that please God*, you must carefully follow these six Rules.

Rule,

Rule 1. *Look round about you to the whole latitude and compass of your duty.* Great is the Latitude of Christianity. The *Commandment is exceeding broad*, Psal. 119. 96. And many Professors do scarce look more than one way: but while they intensly mind one thing, they neglect another. It may be while they are taken up with the care of *religious* duties, they forget *relative* duties: Or they are careful of *personal duties*, but very remiss in the duties that they owe to the souls of their *families*; Or they complain and mourn over their *own sins*, but lay not to heart *others* sins: It may be they are more punctual in their more immediate duties towards God, but are very negligent in their duties towards Men: or they will spend much time for their Souls, but do little lay to heart the case of the *Church*, and the misery of perishing souls that are round about them. Possible they keep the *Sabbath* strictly, & pray, and hear, and fear an oath: but in the mean time make little conscience of breaking their *promises*, passing hasty and uncharitable *censures*, *spending time vainly*, being *unprofitable* in their *discourse*, *Close handed* to Godly uses; suffering sin to go unreproved; letting out their *passions* at every petty cross. Many will mind their duty to them that are within, and in the mean time are very short in their duties to them that are without. This is too common a case. Where is the Christian almost that seriously bethinks himself, what might I do to win souls? It may be you will go into the company of the godly, where you may be edified, but when do you go to your poor neighbours, whom you see to live in a sinful state, and tell him of his danger, and labour to gain him unto Christ. Yea,

so

so much is this great duty neglected, and out of fashion, that I am afraid many question whether it be a *duty* or no. As if you might let sin lie upon the soul of your Brother and yet be innocent, *Levit.* 19. 17. If it were but his Ox or his Ass that lay ready to perish, you would make no question but it were your duty to help him out of the ditch: And do you think in earnest, that you owe more to these, than you do to his *soul*? Is it to *Ministers* only, or to all Believers that Scripture belongs, *Prov.* 11. 30. *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that winneth souls is wise.* Surely the lives of too many Christians do speak the same language that *Cain* spake with his mouth, *Am I my Brothers keeper?* Gen. 4. 9. Tis true, God will have you keep every one within the bounds of your proper stations, but so as to take occasions, yea to seek occasions, as you are able, to be doing good to others. Do you not know how to get within your poor neighbours? Carry an alms with you, do him a kindness, oblige him by your courteous and winning carriage. Then I shall look to see the Kingdom of Christ flourish gloriously, when every one that professeth godliness, shall arise and take hold of the skirt of his neighbour. Oh see your neglects in this, do not think it enough to keep your own Vineyard: Let your Friends and Neighbours have no quiet for you, till you see them setting in good earnest to seek after Heaven. Oh if you might bring in but every one *his man* to Christ, what a blessed thing were this! I lose my self in this Argument, but I am content to do so, this duty being so miserably neglected.

Too many live as if Religion lay all in *praying* and

and *hearing holy conference*, and the like; forgetting that *pure Religion and undefiled is this, to visit the Fatherless and the Widow in their affliction*, Jam. 1. 27. The other should be so done, as that this should not be left undone. You make conscience of being just and true, and faithful; but do you not forget to win upon others by your kindness and affableness? as if it were not written in your Bibles; *be pitiful, be courteous, having compassion one of another*, 1 Pet. 3.8. Say not, it is not my nature; What doth grace serve for, but to correct the evils of your temper? Is not ours a Religion of self-denial? Do not the Rules of our Religion enjoyn us, to be followers of whatsoever is lovely and of good report, and may render Religion amiable to the world? *Phil.* 4. 8.

Rule 2. *Use a wise forecast, that every duty may fall in its time and order; and every work may have its room.* It is not enough *to do* Gods work, but it must be done in *his order*. That which in it self is good and necessary, may be so ill timed, as to become a sin. It is a duty to tell your Brother of his sin; but to rip it up in your passion, or to be retorting upon him when he is christianly admonishing you, is a sin. Your worldly business must not shut out Religion, nor religious Duties take you so up, as to neglect your callings. But every duty must have its place. But for the doing all in Gods order, Take these five *Directions*.

Direct. 1. *Begin at home in provoking to good*: Why should God plead with you? *Thou that teachest another teachest thou not thy self?* Rom. 2. 21. Be an *example* of thine *own rule*, else the hypocrites charge will come in against thee. *Mat.* 23. 4. *They bind heavy burdens, but will not*

touch

touch them with one of their fingers. Observe Gods order, *Deut.*6.6,7. *These words which I command thee shall be in thine heart.* That must be our *first care.* And then having got our Lesson well our selves, we must then teach it to others: *And thou shalt teach them diligently to thy Children, and tell of them when thou,* &c. At least if thou hast not already attained it, be sure to learn with the first; and when thou presest a duty, intend thy self first, and speak most to thine own heart.

2. *In reproving evil:* Otherwise thou wilt be branded for an hypocrite, *Matth.*7.5. *First cast the beam out of thine own eye.* We may not think, as many do mistakingly, that we must not reprove another, when we are guilty of the same sin. But we must in such cases be sure to cast the first stone at our selves. *Be first and most angry* with thy self, and *more severe* to those own sins, than any others. 'Tis strange to see the great *censoriousness of Professors to others,* and how tender they are of their own corruptions, and impatient of reproof: Reader, fear and avoid this sin.

Direct. 2. *Let God be first served.* Let God have the *first* of thy *thoughts,* the first of the *day,* the first of thy *strength*: How heavily is God displeased with the prophane Priests, because they will serve *themselves first* with the Sacrifices before him, 2 *Sam.* 2. 15, 16. And it is the holy Counsel that one gives: *Hold the door of thy heart fast against the world in the morning, till thy heart hath been first in Heaven, and seasoned and fortified from thence against the Temptations that thou art like to meet with as soon as thou comest down below.* Indeed all must be done as Gods service: but so as that his *immediate* service must be done *first.* It is the

counsel

counsel of several Heathens, *That all undertakings should be begun with prayer.* Saith *Aratus*, *Let us begin with God*: And the very *Mahometans* begin their Books always as men do use to do their Wills, *In the Name of God.*

Direct. 3. *First cleanse the Inside.* Matth. 23, 26. *Cleanse first that which is within the Cup.* Though they are much out that live as if *all* their work did lie within door, yet remember that it lies *chiefly* here. It's a most preposterous course in Religion to begin first with the out side, *Jer.* 4. 14. *O Jerusalem wash thine heart!* when once this is done reformation will soon follow in the life, but not otherwise. Many are careful that all that appears to Men should be beautiful, but their hearts are neglected: These carry upon them the marks of the hypocrite, *Matth.* 23. 27, 28. And what will it profit thee, O vain man, to have all kept secret from men, since God knows and detests thee? And hath appointed a day when he will rip open all thy pack, and anatomize thy heart, before the world, 1 *Cor.* 4. 5. *Eccles.* 12. 14. *Rom.* 2. 16.

Direct. 4. *Eye those duties most that are of most importance*, Matth. 23. 23. The Hypocrite is very punctual in *lesser* matters, but neglects the weightiest things of the Law, Judgment, and Mercy, and Faith: He is for a Religion that will *cost him little*: and therefore *words* being *good cheap*, he will be as forward in talk as any, mighty zealous in the *circumstantials* of Religion, and marvellous *censorious* of others that come not up to his mind, as men of *wide Principles* and *large Consciences*: But in the mean time, he is very negligent in *secret* Duties, a great stranger to *self-denyal*, and *walking humbly with God.* He *strains wonderfully*

at a Ceremony; but it may be he can swallow the *gains of unrighteousness*, or the baits of temperance fast enough: It may be he will *decry Superstition*, and never wants a stone to fling at a *prophane Church-man*: But in the mean time *walks loosly* in his *Family*, makes little conscience of his *dealings*, or will take up his *Cups* as freely as another, so he be not drunk: Or if he will not take a penny of his neighbours *estate*, he is most unmerciful to his *good name*, and will *take up any report that is going*. Brethren, you must make conscience of the least sin, and of the least duty. But it is a fearful sign when men are zealous against *lesser sins*, and yet *connive at greater*, as these are. Matth. 23. 24.

Direct. 5. *Take the first opportunity when God gives a fit season for any duty*. Let not Satan beguile you, by telling you of another or a better time. It may be thou hast a purpose to reprove thy Brother for his Sin, but how long wilt thou be a *purposing*? *Now* God gives thee an opportunity, it may be thy backward heart saith, [*not now, but another time*.] And so it is *put off*, till he or thy self are removed, or he is hardned, or at least thou art guilty of the sin that he commits in the mean while: because thou hast *not done thy duty* to prevent it. It is in thine heart to deal with thine unconverted friend or neighbour about his spiritual estate, but it may be while thou *art delaying* death comes and snatches him away in his sins, or takes thee off, and so farewel for ever to any opportunity for doing the soul of thy Brother any good. How often are our closet duties hindred, or miserably disturbed for want of care to lay hold on the first opportunity? We think another hour in the

day may do as well: but then one thing or another unexpectedly falls in, that nothing is done, or nothing to purpose. Therefore beware of this cheat. A man can scarce peep into the world, but one brier and thorn or another will catch him. Therefore take opportunity by the fore-top. Our Saviour would take his *season* for prayer before day, when his other work was pressing, *Mark* 1. 35.

Rule 3. *Do nothing of things Sacred without Gods command: nothing in things Civil without Gods allowance*; Offer not with strouge fire. In Gods worship you must see you be well able to answer that question, *Who hath required these things at your hands?* Here the command must be observed without adding or diminishing, *Deut.* 12. 32. yet understanding this with two Cautions.

1. *Though men may not stamp their invented Ceremonies with a moral signification, nor impose, nor use them, though with good intention of edifying the people by devised means.* Matth. 15. 9. As if Christ had not sufficiently provided for the edifying of his people without their devices. And though nothing may be used as *a part of worship* that God hath not commanded, *Col.* 2. 23. (for it is enough to make any thing rejected by the Lord of divine worship) if he shall say, [*I commanded it not, I spake it not, neither came it into my mind.*] *Jer.* 7. 31. and 19. 5. Yet nevertheless those things that are *merely circumstantial*, and are in their *general kind* necessary, and not intended as any part or means of worship, may be *determined of by humane prudence* according to the *general Rules of the Word*, which must always be observed, 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. 40. And for want of understanding many have ig-

rantly condemned *preaching by an Hour glass*, in a *High place*, in *Churches*, by way of *Doctrine* and *Use*, &c, running from one extreme to another.

2. We may not think that Gods Ordinances remaining for substance may be *forsaken*, because of *some faults of the Administrators*, or in the *way of their Administration*. The *administring* of *Gods Ordinances* belongs not to the *People*, but to the *Minister*: And *if he fail in his duty by administring them in a way that is not*, and is *false administring*, it is *my grief*, but *his sin*. *Hophi & Phinees* were corrupt in their lives, and brought in much corruption and rudeness into the service of God; yet *Elkanah* and *Hannah* with others of the Godly, did nevertheless attend Gods worship and Sanctuary, 1 *Sam.* 1. 2. Much corruption was crept in both into the Doctrine and Worship and lives of the Administrators in the Church of the Jews; yet our Saviour (though he *N.B.* still cried down the Corruptions, and would not joyn to them) never prohibited Communion with them in Gods Worship, but enjoyns it, *Matth.* 5. 24. *Mark.* 1. 40. *Luke* 5. 14. and practises it both He, his Parents, and Apostles, *Luke* 2. 21, 22, 24, 39, 42, 43, 46. *Acts* 21. 23. 24. 26.

But now in *things Civil*, it is sufficient that you have the *allowance* of the Word, though not the Command: always provided that the *general Rules* be here observed, *To do all to the glory of God*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. And not to abuse our *lawful liberty* to the offence of others, *Rom.* 14. 21. Now your actions being thus justifiable, as to the *matter* of them, without which it is impossible, had you never

ver so good intentions, to *please God*) the influence and virtue of *holy Ends* into them will be so effectual, as to turn all into *Religious Duties*; as the touch of the Philosophers Stone turns the baser Mettal into Gold.

Rule 4. *In every action let God be uppermost, but in religious Actions let God be all.* Let *none* of your actions *terminate in your selves*, but labour to be able in sincerity to give this account of any thing you set about, that this you do, *because it is pleasing unto God, because this is his will* concerning you. Set a mark upon this Caution. Beware in those Actions wherein *Self* may bear a part, lest it should sweep Stakes and carry all. You may in your *common Actions* have an eye to your *outward Commodity*, and *comfortable being* in the world: but this must not be the *chief thing*, much less *the all* that you design herein: for by looking no higher than *self* you incur this double mischief, 1. You lose so much from your own account. 2. You usurp upon the great Prerogatives of God. I fear we are not aware of the fearful evil that is in *Self seeking*; It is no less than justling God beside the Throne, and setting our selves in his room. It is Gods great Prerogative, and the proper Worship that is due to Him as God, that He should be the *Last End of all the operations of us his Creatures*, and that all our motions should terminate in Him. Now when we eye our *own commodity* and *not God*, and look to *this more* than unto God, we arrogate the divine Prerogative to our selves, and set our selves above Him, which is no less than heinous Idolatry: And if it be such an heinous sin to bow down to an Image, which is but the giving Gods *outward Worship* to the Crea-

ture, how much more to seek and honour our selves before God? which is to give his *inward worship*, which of all is the principal, to the creature. Oh how many, that pass for good Christians will be found heinous Idolaters! because they have sought their own carnal ends more than God and his glory. And many real Christians, though they mainly design God and his glory, yet in many particular actions contract great guilt by looking no higher than themselves in what they do. I know you cannot be always thinking of God; yet I would have you never to forget what you have been taught; in the entrance of every solemn action to remember God, and make him your *end*. *Lie down* in the Name of God every *Evening*: Go forth in his Name every *Morning*, resolving to undertake all for Him. When you enter upon your Callings, sit down at your Meals, make any Journey, or Visit, do it as unto the Lord, with design to *please him therein*. This you may come to with care and watchfulness.

Again, In *Religious actions* let *God be all*. Here *self* (*I mean carnal self*) must be shut out: otherwise this dead Flie will spoil the Box of most precious Oyntment. 'Tis true, *self* will be crowding in, but you must knock it down carefully: otherwise, if this be the predominant ingredient, all your duties will be but lost labour. What more pleasing to God than *Prayer*? This is *Incense* before him, *Psal.* 141. 1, 2. What more delightful than *Alms*? This is a Sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing unto Him, *Phil.* 4. 8. How happy a Testimony had *Cornelius*, *Thy Prayers and Alms are come up as a memorial before God*! Acts 10. 4. Yet when *Self* is predominant in those

Duties, *Prayers, Alms*, &c. all are lost, *Mat.* 6.7. and 23. 5.

Rule 5. *When you have done all, be careful to deny all, Luke* 17. 10. or not deny *Gods mercy* in inabling and assisting you: This must be with all thankfulness observed: But attributing nothing to your selves, and giving God all the glory. Take the pattern of holy *David*, 1 Chron. 29. 14. *But who am I, and what is my People that we should offer so willingly? of thine own have we given thee*] And of Blessed *Paul*. 1 Cor. 15. 10. *Not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*] And of good *Nehemiah*, who when he had done most eminent service for God, flies at last to pardoning mercy, *Neh.* 13. 22 *Remember me, O God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.*

Rule 6. *Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus*, Col. 3. 17. Having carefully set out for God in the Morning, and directed your common actions to *Him* as *your end*, throughout the day, doing all as in his sight, and with a desire to please Him therein; bring all to *Christ in the Evening*, and present all unto God by him, confidently expecting Gods acceptance and reward for all that you have done. For this he hath promised, be your actions never so mean, because they were *done as his service*, Col. 3. 22, 23, 24, Ephes. 6. 6, 7, 8. If you neglect this, you lose all at last: For God will accept of no sacrifice but from the hand of the *Priest*: and therefore you must look for no acceptance with God, nor any reward from him, but only through Christ, 1 *Peter* 2. 5. *John* 14. 6. You must be sure therefore not only to make a formal mention of Christs Name, but to build all your hope of success only upon him, and to come

to GOD with an Actual and Lively dependance upon him:—

Thus I have resolved the Case propounded. I will but Answer an Objection, and briefly press your Duty by some Motives, and so conclude.

Object. You bind heavy burdens: What must we be always in the Traces? Surely this severity of Religion is more than needs.

Ans. 1. Burden man! why, it is thy Happiness: If Holiness and pleasing God be a burden: Health is a burden; Heaven and Happiness are burdens.

Ans. 2. This is no other burden than what *God himself* hath bound upon your Consciences, Rom. 9. 20. *Who art thou, O Man that replyest against God?* Have I put upon you a devised and unnecessary strictness? or bound that burden upon you, which I will not touch with one of my fingers? 1 Cor. 9. 8. *Say I this as a man, or saith not the Law the same also?* I pray you whose word is this? *Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long*, Prov. 23. 17. *Do all to the glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Exercise thy self unto God*, 1 Tim. 4. 7. What have I pressed, but what the Saints have practised? Phil. 3. 13, 14. *One thing I do, I press towards the mark.* Ps. 27. 4. *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after.* And Psal. 119. 38. *Thy servant that is devoted to thy fear*, Gen. 5. 22. *Enoch walked with God three hundred years.* What is this but what the Scripture hath foretold shall be? *They shall walk up and down in the Name of the Lord*, Zech. 10. 12. *Then shall be upon the Bells of the Horses, and every Pot in Jerusalem, holiness to the Lord*, Zech. 14. 20, 21. Dispute

not

not against God, but up and be doing. It is an ill sign when the heart rises against the strictness of the duty: you utterly mistake, in thinking this life of strictness to be a bondage. Who have joy unspeakable and full of glory? Who do know the peace that passeth all understanding: if not those that do thus walk with God?

Now, my Brethren, let me beseech you to be the conscientious Practitioners of this great Lesson. Study to do always those things that are *pleasing unto God*. Oh that I knew but how to engage you; that I could but get you to set these Rules before you all the days of your lives for your practice! 'Tis not enough that you give the hearing, and like the Preacher, and approve the Doctrine. But Sirs, what will you do? Too many of my Hearers are like *Ezekiel's*, Chap. 33.32. What say you, Brethren, will you learn with me? O that I might lead you on to a through acquaintance with the strictness and power of Religion, and to that holy frame that will be *Gods delight* and your *felicity*. Brethren, what seek I for? God knows this is my ambition, that I may but help you on in the way of holiness: I would not that you should be such bad Proficients, as to be always of the lower form, and keep on meerly in a dull and barren course. My desire for you is, that you should not be Shrubs, but Cedars, of tall growth, choice Experience, singular Communion, walking with God, shining to the conviction of the world. Will you let me but prevail with you in so good a Design? Why should you mourn at the last, and say, *How have I hated Instruction, and my heart despised Reproof: I have not obeyed the voice of my Teachers,*

Teachers, nor inclined my ear to them that instructed me, Prov. 5. 11, 12, 13. That I may invite you to this holy course, Consider,

1. *It is very possible*: for first, *God is very easie to be pleased*: He is not like a froward Master that cannot, that will not be pleased: If you do but make it your *study* and your *care to please him*, and throughly set your hearts to it, your willing mind shall be accepted, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. And though you should not go through with the work, God will say, *Thou didst well that it was in thine heart*, 2 Chron. 6. 8. When the *heart is set* to please the Lord, and we do unfeignedly put to it, though there be very many failings, God will overlook them, 2 *Chron.* 30. 18, 19, 20.

Secondly, God hath *told you what will please him* and hath cut out your work to your hand. You need not say, *wherewith shall we come before the Lord? he hath shewed you what is good, and what he requireth of you*, Micah 6. 6, 7, 8. You need not say *Who shall ascend into heaven to bring down the mind of God from Heaven?* No *the word is nigh you*, Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8. God hath set before you in his Law, as in a Table, on one side the things that *please*; on the other, those that displease him: oh that you may be found among those that *choose the things that please him*. Isa. 56. 4, 5. Otherwise since *you know your Masters will, and you do it not*, you will be found worthy of *many stripes*, Luke 12. 47.

Thirdly, *God hath given particular Rules for the doing of all your work in that manner that will please Him*. Had God told you only *what must be done* and not *how* it must be done; you might have been at a loss: but he hath prescribed the very

manner,

manner, how every thing must be done, that you might have full direction, *Rom.*12.8. 1 *Pet.*4.11. He hath shewed you how you must pray, and hear and give alms: how you must carry it in all your relations: He hath told you not only how you must fast, but how you must eat; to wit, with watchfulness, and temperance; not as those who have nothing to do, but to fill their paunches; but with an eye to his glory, as those that are feeding and relieving the servants of Jesus Christ. He hath shewed you, not only how you should *rest on the Lords day*, but how you must follow your Calling on the rest; to wit, with diligence and discretion, minding Him as your end, as those that herein serve the Lord Christ. He hath told you how you must manage your dealings, with equity and charity, doing the very same to others, that your consciences tell you, you would have them in the like case to do unto you: how you must *sleep*, even as those that know he *compasseth your path, and your lying down*; and how you must awake; to wit, so as to *be still with him*.

Fourthly, *God hath given you special helps to this end*: You *have the mind of Christ*, 1 Cor.2.16. and you have the *Spirit of Christ*, 1 Cor.2.12. Indeed *they that are in the flesh cannot please God*: but you *are not in the flesh, but in the spirit*, Rom.8.8,9. You that are Believers have not the Law only in your Bibles, but in *your hearts*, Heb.8.10.

II. *It is very profitable*: *Glorious advantages shall you have by this course*. First, this is the most speedy and certain way to *assurance*: for want of which many of you complain; but henceforth you must complain no more: For either you *will*, *follow* this course, and then you will have it;

or

or you will *not*, and then cease your hypocritical complaints, when it is through your own wilful disobedience that you are without it. When once you are habituated to this course, and do find it to be the chief of your care, and that which your very hearts are set upon above all things else, to *glorifie and please God, and approve your selves in his sight*, you cannot want assurance, unless through your own ignorance: For this is the most undoubted evidence in the world, that you are the Children of God, what ever unallowed failings you may be guilty of.

Secondly, *Hereby you shall be certain of Gods gracious and favourable presence always with you*, See the Text, *He that sent me is with me, for I do always those things that please him.*

Thirdly, *By this means you shall be always laying up a Treasure in Heaven.* Brethren, *What are you for?* Are you men for Eternity, or are you for present things? Is your *design* for Glory, Honour and Immortality? Are you for riches in the other world? or of dunghill spirits, preferring your part in *Paris* before your part in *Paradise?* If you are for true riches, here is your way; By this you shall be daily and hourly increasing the stock of your own glory: my vehemence is only, that fruit may abound to your account; that all you do might meet you in Heaven, and Christ may shew your good works another day, as the Widows did *Dorcas* her Garments, *Acts* 9. 39.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

A Fourth Case of Conscience.

WHat weariness in, and unwillingness to Duties may stand with Grace, and what not?

For the resolving this, some Distinctions must be premised, and then some Conclusions elicited.

Distinct. This *weariness* and *unwillingness* must be distinguished, 1. According to the *degrees* of it, and so it is either *partial* and *gradual*, or else *prevalent* and *plenary*. 2. According to the *subject* of it, and so this *weariness* is either of the *Members*, or else of the *Mind*: 3. According to the *prevalency* of it, and so it is either *transient* and *occasional*, or else *fixed* and *habitual*. 4. According to the *sense* we have of it, and so it is either matter of *Allowance* to us, or matter of *annoyance*. 5. According to the *Cause* of it, and so it is either from a *fixed dislike of the food*, or else from an *Accidental distemper* of the Stomach. 6. According to the *effects* of it: for it is either *victorious*, and makes us give over duties, or else *abhorred* and repulsed by Grace, the Christian still holding on in the way of Duty.

Conclus. 1. Where this weariness is *only* in the *Members* (or at least *chiefly*) but there is still a *willingness* of the *mind*, this is no matter of questioning our Estate: where the *mind* out-goes and out-

does

does the *body*, and the *appetite* to duties continues in vigour, though there be a languishing of the *natural strength*, and weariness of the *bodily organs*, this is not our sin, but affliction. But too commonly the *Body* hath so much influence upon the *Mind*, and causeth a listlessness and sluggishness there, and makes it negligent in its office: Yet when this doth proceed from the failing of the spirits, tired with bodily labour and exercise, and from the distemper of the parts, our most pitiful Father considers our frame, and remembers we are but dust: and our merciful High Priest that is not untouched with the sense of our infirmities is ready to frame our excuse, *That the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

2. Where our *weariness* in, and *unwillingness* to duties, is only *gradual* and *partial*, not *plenary* and *prevalent*, it is not sufficient to conclude our selves graceless: While the Twins are together in the womb, and two Nations within our bowels, there will be contrary inclinations. The flesh will never say *Amen*, to a good motion as such, but will be lusting against the Spirit, and will hang back when the Spirit puts forwards, and pull down when the spirit bends upwards: So that while corruption remaineth, there will be always a *dissenting* party and continual conflicts: from whence it is no wonder there should arise some weariness: yet the *Spirit* is the *prevailing interest*, & though oft-times *foyled*, yet hath *mostly* the mastery in the combate, and carries it against the flesh, though not without much resistance and reluctancy from the rebel opponent.

3. Where this *weariness* is only *transient*, during the present temptation or defection, which as soon

as

as the tired Soul can get out of, it returns to its former temper and pleasure in holy duties, there is only matter of *humiliation*. But when it is the *setled, permanent* and *habitual* frame of the mind, it is a matter of questioning our conditions. The holy Psalmist under a distertion, was even almost perswaded to give over with Religion; but when he is *himself*, nothing is so sweet, nothing so lovely and desirable to him, as the duties of holiness. But for them who have in their ordinary setled course and frame, *no mind* to duties, but are *hailed* to them by Conscience, or engaged by *Company*, or Custom, or the like, their case is fearful in that measure, that duty is unpleasing and not loved.

4. Where this *weariness* of, and *unwillingness* to Duties is *painful* and *grievous*, as a sore in the eye, as a sickness in the heart, the state is good: But where it is *naturally* allowed, and meets with little or no resistance, it is a black mark; for this argues there is nothing but flesh, that there is no contrary Principle in such a heart. For if there were, the Spirit would at least make opposition: This was the very frame of those unsanctified sinners that counted the Sabbaths and Service of God, an unprofitable burden, a very *weariness*, a *bondage* not to be born, *Mal.* 1. 13. A gracious heart when under such a distemper, as that God's service seems a *weariness*, is even weary of himself; while *this* is *burdensom* he is a *burden to himself*: he cannot enjoy himself, while in such a frame wherein he cannot enjoy God: and if this be the Case, our State is good, though the frame be bad.

5. Where this *weariness* and *unwillingness* is, not from a *rooted dislike* of the food, but an *accidental*

dental and *preternatural indisposition* of the stomach, or being disappointed of Gods presence in duties, the main state is safe? You know under a distemper the Appetite may disgust, and nauseate the food that a man doth love above all other meats when he is well: and so it is here. Do you when you are your selves, relish more sweetness in Gods service than in your Meats and Drinks? are no sweets so delightful to you as fellowship and communion with God, when you can attain to it in duties? Do you come away discontented because you cannot meet with God? Is the ground why your countenances fall, and your hearts be discouraged, because you have (with them) toyled and spread the net, and have not caught what you went for; because you have no answer nor income from God? If it be thus, it is a sign your hearts be set upon God, and that you place the happiness and comfort of your lives in God, and so that your state is safe: Otherwise when there is a *fixed antipathy* to Duties, and an *habitual dislike* of them and *contrariety* to them, the Case is very sad.

6. Where our *weariness* and *unwillingness* is such as makes us to *give over* our *duties*, so as to live in the *ordinary neglect* of them, it is a fearful sign: but where notwithstanding present discouragements, we hold on in the performance of our duties, and a humble waiting upon God, for removal of our difficulties till we are brought to a better frame, this argues well. The Church her self may be greatly deserted: but then she gives not over Duties, but seeks after her beloved, and makes diligent enquiring, and will not be at rest untill she hath found him. But the hypocrite

gives

gives up and will not wait upon the Lord any longer. Not but that a deserted soul, may under the violence of temptations omit duties for a time: But his condition this while is most *painful, restless* and *grievous* to him, and he quickly returns again, and never comes to live in quiet, and ordinary omission of known duties.

Concln. 7. When our *weariness* and *unwillingness* is such as makes us *fall out* with the service of Christ, and willing to ease our selves of his yoke and to throw off his burden: This is a bad sign. But when we fall out with *our selves*, and justifie and approve Christs Ways and Service, it is well. Thus it was with *Paul*: he doth not quarrel with the Law as too strict, and too severe, nor think of breaking off his bonds, and taking his liberty, but he pleads for the Law, and greatly approves it, and commends it, and condemns the backwardness of his own nature, *Rom.* 7. 12, 25. When men are more willing to be rid of Christs burden, than of the distemper that makes it grievous, and cast about for ease, by widening their bonds, and not by bringing their minds to them, it is a woful discovery of an unsound heart. And thus much for this Case.

Awakening Questions *propounded to the* UNCONVERTED:

And Counsels *to the* CONVERTED.

THat I may reach every Mans Case, I shall speak something to the Unconverted, and something to the Converted.

For the *Unconverted*, there are these Six *Questions* which I would advise them daily to put to their Souls.

Q. I. *What estate did my soul come into the world in?* Was it not in a state of *Death*, *Ephes.* 2. 1. An estate of *Wrath? Verse* 3. Sirs, awake and bethink your selves where you are, and whither you are going. While you are in your natural, unconverted, unbelieving state, all your sins are unpardoned, and the wrath of God abideth on you, *Acts* 3. 19. *John* 3. 36. Suppose you saw a poor creature hanging over a burning fiery furnace by nothing but a twine-Thread, like to break every moment, would not your hearts shake for such an one? Sirs, it is your very case, you hang over the Infernal burnings by nothing, but the small thread of your lives, which you know not but it may crack the next moment, and then where are you? Is this a Case for you to go on merrily, and contentedly in?

Q. II. *What condition is my soul now in?* Am I changed and renewed by Conversion, or am I not? Speak Conscience, hath this man, this woman

man been soundly and savingly changed both in heart and life? Where are your evidences? Can you shew the marks of the Lord Jesus upon your souls? Let your Conscience answer: where was the place? What was the means? When was the time that thy soul was throughly renewed? At least if you cannot shew the *Time*, *Place*, nor *Means*, can you prove the *thing*? Can you say with him [one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, I now see.] Sirs, be not deceived, I tell you whatever you be, and what ever you do, nothing will avail you to Salvation, except you be *new Creatures*, Gal. 6. 15.

Q. III. *What if I should lose my Soul? What fair work should I make of it then?* This is very possible, *Matth.* 16. 26. Yea it is the case of the most: There are but few, few of the Children of men that do escape safe to Heaven, *Matth.* 7. 14. Sirs, be aware of your danger, and fear lest a promise being left of entring into Rest, any of you should at last come short of it, *Heb.* 4. 1. Suppose a man were to travel through some perillous Wood or Wilderness, having but one Jewel in all the World, in which his *All* was bound up, and should see some stand on one hand, and some on the other, and hear one company in this place, and another in that, crying out under the hands of some cruel Robbers: Oh in what fear would this Traveller go, lest he should lose this Jewel, and be robbed of all at once? Why thou art the man. This Traveller is thy self, This Jewel is thy Soul; This Wilderness, or Wood, is this World thou art to Travel through. Swarms of Sins, Legions of Devils, a whole world of Temptations

these are the Robbers that lie in wait for thy Soul: and if all that these can do can keep thee out of Heaven thou shalt never come there. Oh what if thy Pride, or Worldliness, thy Delays, and Triflings in Religion, should at last betray thy Soul into the Robbers hands? Other losses may be repaired; but thy Soul being once lost, God is lost, Christ is lost, Heaven, all lost for evermore.

Q. IV. *What do I do for my Soul?* What, have I a Soul, an immortal Soul to care for, and look no better after it, nor bestow no more of my time, nor pains upon it, no more of my thoughts about it? When *Augustus* the Emperor saw the out-landish Women carrying *Apes*, and such kind of strange Creatures in the Streets in their Arms, he asked, What! have the Women in these Countries no Children? So it may be said of many among us, that are early and late at their worldly business, but let the care of Religion lie by neglected; what, have these men no Souls? why man hast thou a *Soul*, and yet dost so little in thy Closet, so little in thy Family, from day to day for it? what meaneſt thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God, that thou perish not, *Jonah* 1. &c. What will become of thy Soul, if thou lookest to it only at this careless rate?

Q. V. *What if God should this night require thy Soul? where would death Land thee?* Luke 12. 19, 20. There was one that promised himself many *merry days*, and *years*, as it is like thou dost; but that same night God called for his Soul. Sirs, are you in your postures? are you fit to die? Oh dare not to

to live in such a Case, nor in that Course, in which you would not dare to die?

Q. VI. *What a happy Case were I in, if I had but secured my Soul?* Oh, if this were but once done, how sweetly mightest thou live! Then thou mightest eat thy Bread, and drink thy Wine with a merry Heart, when assured that God accepteth thee and thy works, *Eccles.* 9. 7. Then thou mightest lie a down in peace, and rise up in peace; go out and come in in Peace; then thou mightest look death in the face, thou mightest look dangers in the face; Yea, look Devils in the face, and never be afraid. Oh Sirs, if there be any Ensurance-office for Souls in all the world, one would think you should be seeking to it. And thus much for the *Questions*, which though of use to all, yet were intended chiefly for unconverted, impenitnent Souls.

Counsels *and* Cordials *for the* CONVERTED.

The Counsels *are These.*

Coun. I. *THat you put hard to it, to get that by these hazardous opportunities that may quit all your Cost.* What pity is it that you should adventure much and yet gain but little? How sad would it be, if you should at last suffer deeply for your Conscientious attendance upon God in such seasons, and when you come into a prison, or into Banishment, should find that you had not *got that by them* that would bear you out.

Coun. II. *That you value no mercy barely as it serves to content to your flesh; but as it stands in order to Eternity; and may serve to the furthering of your Makers Glory.* God hath *preserved* your liberties, and hath restored mine: But what of all this? unless we improve our liberties for Eternity, what are we better than those that are in Prison, if this be all the advantage we have, a little more content to our flesh? The Cypher put to the Figure is of great consideration, but put by it self it signifies nothing at all. These Creature-comforts separated from their respect to God, and Eternity, are of no value: but in order to these ends they signifie much. We have ease and fulness, when many others are in pains, and in poverty; And we have much the start of them, if we be wise to improve our Health in laying in apace against a wet day, and preparing apace for Eternity: and if we serve the Lord with the more abundant diligence, and chearfulness and gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things. But if this be all we have by it, that our Bones do lie a little softer, and our Palats are tickled with a little the more delight, what profit have we by our health, or our estates? If they that be sick, or poor, do love the Lord as well, or serve the Lord as much as we, they have the advantage of us; and better were it for us to be poor and sick as they be.

Coun. III. *Rest not in probabilities for Heaven, but labour for certainties. Beloved, certainty may be had; else the Counsel of God to make our Calling and Election sure were in vain* 2 Pet. 1. 10. Else the experience of the Saints were but a de-

lusion

fusion: who tell us they know they are passed from death to life, 1 *John* 3. 14, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. *Job.* 19. 25, 26. else the power of self reflection were to no purpose, and the spirit which is in man should not know the things of the man, 1 *Cor.* 2. 11. Now if a *certainty may be had*, will you not put in for it, and turn every stone but that you will get it? Sirs, now if ever, you have need to put hard to it to get assurance: We are at miserable uncertainties for all outward enjoyments; we know not how soon we may be called to part with them all: Christians, what do you mean? will you be content to have nothing sure? will you not settle your everlasting conditions, now you are so unsetled as to your outward condition? What will you do in the day of visitation, when extremity comes upon you, if you have not assurance that God will receive you? It would make ones heart tremble to think of being put upon such a fearful temptation to part with all for Christ, and not to be sure of him neither? O man, what an advantage will the tempter now have upon thee, when he shall suggest, wilt thou be such a fool as to let go all at once? Thou seest Heaven is not sure, Christ is not sure, therefore keep the world while thou hast it, and hold what thou hast sure: Beloved, what a fearful slighting of God, and contempt of Heaven, and Glory, and all the Promises doth this argue, that you can be content to be at uncertainties, whether they be yours or no? How many of you be there that do not know whether you be going to Heaven or to Hell? and what desperate carelesness doth this argue,

to go on from Week to Week in such a Case? Some hopes you have that you shall do well, but put not me off with hopes, never be satisfied till you are able to say, not only, *I hope I shall be saved, but I know I am passed from death to life; I know that when the earthly house of this Tabernacle shall be dissolved, I have a building not made with hands*, &c. 2 Cor. 5. 1.

Coun. IV. *Be not satisfied with the truth of Grace, but reach after the Growth.* Do not think all is done when you have attained the Evidence of Grace; but put on hard towards the increase. That person that doth not desire and design perfection, never came up to Sincerity. He that desires Grace truly, desires it not barely as a Bridge to Heaven, and so to seek no more than will just bear his charges thither: but he desires it for its *own* sake; And therefore desires the height of it. That person that desires Grace only for Heavens sake, and enquires what is the lowest measure of Grace that any one may have and come to Heaven, (by which he meaneth but to be saved from misery) upon this design, that if he could but come to that pitch, he would desire no more, that person is rotten at the heart. Christians, the Lord doth expect of you, that you should not be Babes and Dwarfs; He looks now especially that you should make some progress: What do you more than heretofore? What! do you feell his spurs in your sides, and his Whip at your backs; And yet never mend your pace in Religion, nor stir one jot the faster? Let me commend to you *Paul's* study, *Phil.* 3. 12, 13, 14. It argues a base and unworthy spirit

spirit to content our selves with little things in Religion.

Coun. V. *Labour that Holiness may become your Nature; and Religion your Business.* Then you are come to somewhat indeed in Religion, when the work of God is become your *natural* and beloved Imployment, your Meat and Drink, your Work and Wages. When your Tongues and Hearts do as *naturally* run on God, as others on and of the World: much of that may be attained by constant Care and Prayer. Brethren, let Gods work be done by you, not by the by, but as your greatest Business; *Seek first the Kingdom of God*, Matth. 6. 33. And so what ever you be, you may be able to give that account of your selves, that our Saviour did when they enquired of Him, *What you are about your Fathers business*, Luke 2. 50.

Coun. VI. *Confine not your Religion to your Knees, but carry on an even-spun thread of Holiness through your whole Course.* Brethren, 'tis the disgrace of Religion, that Christians are so unlike themselves, unless it be when they are in holy Duties. This wounds Religion to the quick, when it shall be said of Professors, these men indeed will pray like *Angels*, but for ought we can see they are as *Peevish* and as *Touchy* as any other Men, and they are as hard in their *Dealings*, and make as little Conscience of their *Words* as others do: Beloved, think not Religion lies only, or chiefly, in *Praying*, *Hearing*, *Reading*. No, you must be throughout Religious. Sirs, bring forth your Religion out of your Closets into your ordinary Course. Let there not be a life of Holiness on

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the outside of the Cloth, But let Holiness be woven into the whole of your Conversations. Here lies the excellency and difficulty of Religion: When you have the baits of Intemperance before you, then to hold the Reins hard, and deny your flesh: when you have *Provocation* before you, then to bite in your Passions and bridle the unruly Member? When you have *dealings* with *others*, then to proceed by that Golden Rule of Equity and Charity, *To do to others as your Consciences tell you, you would have them do in the like case to you.* When you are called upon in your several Relations, then to behave your selves with that tenderness and love; with that reference and obedience, with that courtesie and condescention and kindness that becomes you in your various capacities; In this I say lies the Excellency of *Religion*.

Coun. VII. *Ever walk with your end in your Eye.* It is true, according to the usual and useful Similitude. The Traveller thinks not of his Journeys and every step, nor need he: yet there is no Traveller but thinks of it at his setting out: Brethren, there is nothing hinders but that with Prayer and Watchfulness you might come to this, in *every solemn action to mind God as your End*: Impose this upon your selves as your daily Rule to walk by, never to lie down but with these Thoughts, [*Well, I will make use of my Bed as an Ordinance of God, for my natural Refreshment, that a weary Servant of his may be fitted for his Work.*] Never to rise up but with these thoughts, *I will set forth this Day in the Name of the Lord,*

Lord, and make it my business this day throughout, to please him:] Never to set about your Callings, but in the entrance to think thus [*I will set about my Employment in obedience to God, because this is his Will, that I should walk with him in my place and station.*] Never to set down to your Tables, but thinking, *I will now Eat and Drink not meerly to feed my flesh, but to cherish a Servant of Christ Jesus, that he may have strength for his service*;) Charge this upon your selves, and examine in the Evening, how you have minded it, and check your selves wherein you come short. Once learn this, and you are come up to something: and you shall have the undoubted evidence of your sincerity, and shall know the inside of that blessed mystery of walking with God.

Coun. VIII. *Be, and do more than ordinary in your Families and Closets, now in the defects of the more Publick Ordinances.*

1. In your *Closets*: See that your Consciences be able to bear you witness, that under Gods extraordinary Providences, you do more than ever in answer thereunto. It may be you Prayed twice in the Day heretofore; Why should you not at such a time as this is, make one Visit more than ordinary to Heaven, daily to represent before God the calamities of his Church. This be sure of, that somewhat more than heretofore must now be done, else God will look upon Himself as intolerably slighted; and upon his Church as most unnaturally neglected, if we do not now put to it. Be more than ever in self-examination. God doth look that when he is trying of us, we should be

much

much in the tryal of our selves. And here let me put it to your Consciences: How are your rules for daily examination looked after? Do you try your selves by them from day to day? Ah wretched negligence! What have you given your approbation and passed your promise, and yet even in such a Day as this, so much forget your duty? God expects it of you, that now you see Him angry, you should with more jealous fear, and tender circumspection, and holy watchfulness, and self-denial walk before Him; else you will greatly incense his indignation, when he shall see that you slight his anger.

2. In your *Families*: Christians, now the Lord calls aloud upon you to set your houses in order. Oh see what is amiss in them, and strive to cast out that which may be a provocation. Three things I advise you to with reference to your Families.

1. *That you set up the solemn exercise of Catechising Weekly among them*: Methinks I would not question, but that in every Godly Family there is a care of the *Catechism*. But when Governours do only impose it in general upon their Families, and occasionally take an account, I find but little progress is made: and therefore I beseech you to make it a *Solemn, Standing, and Constant Exercise*; and to expect of your Children and Servants as due an account Weekly of what they have learnt in the Principles of Religion, as of any Business of your own. Oh the incredible Benefit that would speedily come of this, if I could but perswade and prevail with my Hearers in so small a Request as this?

2. That

2. *That you be often inquiring into their spiritual estates*; Follow them close, and let them have no quiet till you see they seriously mind and seek spiritual things. Put them upon secret Prayer: Provide helps for them till they are able to go without them: Shew them often the necessity of Regeneration, and Conversion, and the nature thereof. Put them in mind of the fearful misery of an unregenerate estate. Ask them often whether they are Converted or not. Shew them the danger of delaying in such a case. Beloved, 'tis too sadly evident, that as the Ordinances are now somewhere managed, there is a little Conversion-work like to be done. Oh you Governours of Families, do but your duty in your several places, and I doubt not but many Souls will nevertheless be Born to Christ, even in such a day as this.

3. *Call them to an account of their proficiency by every opportunity.* If there be but a Sermon, or a Chapter read, let them give you some account of it. Thus our Saviour, when the Disciples (his Family) were in private, he was asking them whether they did understand, and profit by what they heard in publick.—*Mat.* 13. 1.

Coun. IX. *Be not discouraged by the present Difficulties of Religion, but rather rejoyce in the opportunity to shew your Love and Loyalty to your Lord.* Do not think God hath dealt hardly with you, now your Religion is like to cost you something, and presently think of shrinking, and drawing back to preserve your safety: If you do love the Lord Jesus you should Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad in the opportunity to shew it. Brethren, what hath your Religion cost you,

you hitherto? And for shame suffer not your shrinking and withdrawing, to tell the world that you have not Love enough to Christ, to engage you to run any hazard for him. Do you indeed Love the Lord? Oh then now rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for never had you such an opportunity, in all your lives, to shew your Love as now; For never were you called to adventure so for him, and his service, as now you be. Now resolve, that if Religion will make you Vile, you will be yet More Vile; and let your Zeal and Resolution for God be intended and heightened by the opposition.

The Cordials *follow, which are* Sacrament-Cordials.

Most Dearly Beloved Brethren,

THis Holy Sacrament is appointed as a Sealing Ordinance between Christ and you. The Covenants are made, the terms agreed to on both sides; God is willing to be yours, to all intents and purposes; your Shield and exceeding great Reward, your Refuge and your Rest, your God, and your Guide. While Christ hath it you shall never want; and what God is to him, that he (in your order) will be to you.

You again (through Grace) are willing to be

be his: His in his own way, and on his own terms; willing to serve him; willing to fashion your selves after him: willing to be betrothed to him, and to be commanded by him; to use his remedies, to follow his counsels, and to acquiesce in him as our Blessedness: Thus all are agreed; the Articles are drawn; the Covenants both on Gods part and yours are ready written: And here you are come to put all past controversie, and mutually to seal and subscribe; Oh happy and blessed meeting! Christians, do not forget your errand; Remember where you are and what you are come for, and know that you are upon the solemnest transaction that ever passed between the Creator and the creature. It is Gods admirable condescention that he will be tied to us, and enter into bonds to us to bless us, and reward us. And because our *Faith* is weak, He hath brought his Surety with him, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is a Surety on *his part*, as well as ours, to undertake for the fulfilling of the Promises. And he hath brought the visible signs and pledges by which all shall be firmly past and ratified before your eyes, *This is the New Testament in my Blood*, Luke 22. 20. Written in my Bloud: ratified in my Bloud. Oh Sirs, this is that which God doth here reach forth unto you with his own hand this day; *The New Testament in Christs Blood*. Christians prepare your Ears, and rouze up your Faith, and now believe and hear some of the blessed Articles of that Covenant that God doth here Sign and Seal to you: I shall mention only Nine, which I advise you to lay next your hearts, while you have a day to live. And you shall find the vertue of these Cordials

dials strong and operative in all conditions.

Art. 1. *That he will fulfill to you the place of all Relations.* 2 Cor. 6 18. *I will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters.* Whatever Children may expect from a Father, that you may look for from me: I will find you Meat, be not thoughtful, *I know that you have need of all these things,* Matth. 6. 31, 32. You shall be Cloathed out of my Ward-robe, *Matth.* 6. 28, 29, 30. and wear my Livery: And when you have need of Correction, I will Remember to do it in mercy, and you shall find, *that as a Man chasteneth his Son, so the Lord your God chasteneth you.* Deut. 8. 5.

I will be a Husband to you, and will betroth you unto me for ever, Hosea 2. 19. You shall not need to fear, your Maker is your Husband: I will give you my choice Love: I will give you my heart.

I will be a Lord and Soveraign to you: The Lord is your *Judge,* The Lord is your *Lawgiver:* The Lord is your *King:* Fear not the unrighteousness of men; I will judge your cause, I will defend your Rights, you shall not stand or fall at mans Bar; you shall not be cast at their Votes: Let them curse, I will Bless: Let them Condemn, I will Justifie: Who shall accuse when I shall acquit you? who shall lay any thing to your charge, when I do discharge you? When you come upon tryal for your life to have your eternal state decided, you shall see your Friend your Father on the Bench: And you shall surely stand in judgment, and be found at the right hand amongst the sheep, and hear the King say, *Come ye Blessed.*

I will be a Shepherd to you, fear no evil, for I am with

with you, you shall not want for I will feed you: you shall not wander to be lost, for I will restore you: I will cause you to lie down in green pastures, and lead you beside the Still Waters: If my Officers be careless, I will do it my self: As for you, Oh my flock, Thus saith the Lord God, I will judge between Cattle and Cattle, I will feed my flock, saith the Lord God, and cause them to lie down. I will seek that which is lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and bind up that which is broken, and strengthen that which is sick, but I will destroy the Fat and the strong, and will feed them with judgment.

I will be a Physitian to you. I will heal your backslidings, and cure all your Diseases, fear not, never did soul miscarry that left it self in my hands, and would but follow my prescription.

Well, this is one of the Articles that God here sealeth to, that he will be to you in the place of all Relations. Silence thou quarrelling Unbelief, methinks I hear thy Whispers? that this is too good to be true, that it were presumption in us to count upon all this. What, shall they that must say to Corruption, thou art my Father, be able to say to the incorruptible God, thou art my Father? Shall they that must say to the Worm thou art my Mother, and my Sister, be able to say to the Angels of Light: ye are my fellow Servants? And to the King of Glory: Thou art my Brother, and my Kinsman? shall Majesty espouse himself to misery, and the Worms-meat be married to immortality and Life? How can these things be?

Nay, but O heart of infidelity, what art thou

that repliest against God? Dost thou, under a sly pretence of Humility, question with thy Maker, and call his Veracity into doubt? Is not this his Word, his promise, his Covenant? And is not there his Seal? Why then dost thou doubt, O thou of little Faith?

Art. II. *That he will entitle you to all the Divine Persons and perfections*, Gen. 17. 7. *I will be a God unto thee*; mark, God gives away *himself*, and he gives his *Son to you*, *Isa.* 42. 6. *I will give thee for a Covenant of the people.* This is the Churches Triumph, *Isa.* 9. 6. *Unto us a Son is given.* And he gives his *Spirit* to you, *John* 14. 16. *He shall give you another Comforter.* And Believers acknowledge the Receipt, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. *We have received the Spirit which is of God.* Thus you see all the *Persons* of the God-head are made over to you, and so are all the *Perfections* of the God-head; and so the Covenant runs, Gen. 17. 1. *I am the Almighty God*, or *the All-sufficient God, walk before me and be upright*; these are the terms between God and a Believer. Be thou upright before me, and I will be All-sufficient to thee: The All-sufficiency of God is the Comprehension of all his *Perfections*. Truth without Power, or Power without Wisdom, or both without Goodness, would not be *All-sufficiency*: All-sufficiencie takes in all that is in God (if we may speak of Gods most simple Essence, according to the shallow reach of our present capacity) yea it comprehends infinitely more than can be said or thought. Why now this is the Covenant of Grace which God establishes with you this day, that he will be a *God All-sufficient to you.*

Christians

Christians rouse up your Faith; Now appropriate and apply the Promises; Now believe strongly, and stedfastly, and believing will fill you with joy unspeakable, and full of Glory. I do not wonder if your Faith be put to it in so high and great a Mystery; to draw nigh to the infinite Majesty, and confideringly, and without hesitancy to say, *Thou art mine, and all that thou hast*, this is no easie thing. But thou mayst not dare to doubt it. Canst thou question him who is the Truth? Can the strength of *Israel* lie, or in his word deceive thee? But the soul is ready to reply, Oh the thing is too high, and too great for me to presume to believe, and is ready with *Peter* astonied, to cry out *Depart Lord, for I am a sinful Man.* But why doth thine Hand tremble, and thy Heart fail thee, and thy Feet (with *Peters* when walking on the Waters) begin to sink? What dost thou stick at? Is it at the truth of the Promise? No saith the trembling soul, but sure so much can never belong to me so sinful, I am afraid it is not mine. Why, what saith the promise? *Only be upright.* What though thou hast an hundred Failings, yet thy Heart is upright: the bent of thy Heart is *mainly for God and Holiness*; Thou makest conscience of all Sin, little as well as great, secret as well as open, and doest not deliberately allow thy self in any: thou doest in the setled frame of thy heart prefer the pleasing of God, and value his favour, and fellowship above all worldly good, therefore thou art upright; these Marks are infallible. What, doest thou object thy failings? Art thou under a Covenant of *Works*? Do you think God now stands upon Perfection? The

Covenant is plain: God continueth for *uprightness*, and God *hath wrought* in thee that *condition* that he requires of thee: What can be plainer? Wilt thou suffer the Devil and unbelief to catch the Bread out of thy hand, when God tells thee it is thine? Wilt thou be against thy self, and refuse thine own peace, when God is come to Seal thee up to the day of Redemption: This is that which the Lord here seals to thee, *That he will be God All-sufficient to thee.* O believe, and be thankful, and rejoyce in thine own blessedness: O happy, thrice happy Souls, whom the Living God thus Signeth and Sealeth to, and assigns over all his infinite Perfections as its everlasting possession.

Art. III. *That he will discharge you from all your Debts*, Heb. 8. 10, 12. *This is the Covenant, I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more*, Isa. 1. 18. *Though your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow.* Believest thou this? Come near beloved Christian, approach believingly, and here thou shalt see the Lord crossing out all thy Debts, taking away the *hand-writing* that is against thee, declaring that he hath received a Ransom, and is satisfied, contented, and paid. O happy man that shall leave all thy sins behind thee, why this is the very thing that the faithful God doth here Seal unto thee. Thy Pardon is written in his most Sacred Blood which is here shed for the remission of Sins. So that thou mayest triumph with the Apostle, *Who is he that condemneth, it is Christ that died*, Rom. 8.

Art. IV. *That he will save you from all your enemies*,

enemies, not from the *Combate*, but from the *Conquest*. The victory shall *be sure*, so far God is engaged. So the Covenant runs in its first discovery, that *the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpents head, though he should bruise his heel*, Gen. 3. 15. By the *Seed of the Woman* understand not *Christ only*, but *all Believers*: By the *Serpent* understand not *Satan only*, but all *his party*, the ungodly persecuting World, which are his Children: and all our Tyranous Lusts, which are his Brood, his Works. By his *Bruising our Heel*, understand his molesting, and wounding of us, but not mortally. By our *breaking his Head*, understand the total and final Victory which we shall most certainly obtain over him and all his party at last. Christians, What should we fear! Death? The Covenant here Sealed makes over *Death* as a Legacy to you, and behold it brings you the head of your conquered enemy in a Charger, 1 Cor. 3. 22. *Death is yours*: O blessed and most grateful Present. *Satan*? The Covenant assures you God will *bruise him under your feet shortly*, Rom. 16. 20. *The World? Be of good chear, Christ hath overcome the World*, Joh. 16. 33. *Hell? There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 1. *Sin*? This indeed is to be dreaded, but with a *watchful* and *cautious* fear: not with a *fainting*, *discouraging* fear: *Sin shall not have dominion over you*, Rom. 6. 13, 14.

Christians, here now is meat for your Faith; What do all these holy Promises nothing move you? or carry little savour, or relish with them? What, shall the All-mighty God give it to thee under his own hand, that thou art a fre-

man, and thou make little account of it? shall He give thee thy Protection, and thou lay it by as an useless Paper that signifies little? Oh Sirs, when your hearts are ready to faint because of the Sons of *Anak*, that be in the way; when you see the Black Guard gaping upon you, and the King of Terrors levelling at you, and a wicked World armed with rage against you, and full of malice, and the Thieves and Conspirators in the bosome, watching their opportunity to betray all to them, yet let not this discourage you: These were enough indeed to make a considering mans heart to melt and die within him, but that the Covenant of Grace yields such ample relief against all. Oh be ever mindful of the Covenant: Remember what hath past this day between the Living God and your Souls: Watch, O Christian, and stand fast, quit thee like a Man. The Conquest is sure: Who would not fight with courage, that hath assurance of the Victory.

Art. V. *That He will befriend you in all conditions.* He will be a fast Friend to you in every Change, and turn all things to your good, and when you are ready to say unbelievingly, with *Jacob*, *All these things are against me*, Rom. 8. 28. Gen. 42. 36. If he brings you into the Wilderness, *There he will speak comfortably unto you*, Hosea 2. 14. *In the Fire, and in the Water, He will be with you*, Isaiah 43. 2. *He will be a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the Storm, and a shadow from the Heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a Storm against the Wall*, Isa. 25. 4.

Beloved, here the Lord is come to Seal

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all these Promises to you. Oh go home and bless your selves in the sweet Security of your estate. God hath promised you that what-ever condition you be in, you shall have Succour, and Support from him, and enjoy his presence with you, and see his Finger in all your Troubles; sweetly turning all to the best. Go away and live like Believers. Be not afraid of Sufferings, but shew that you believe what God hath Promised, that afflictions shall not hurt you. The next time any trouble comes upon you. Remember what a Promise God hath passed unto you this day, and wait on him believingly for the happy issue and event of every trial that shall befal you.

Art. VI. *That he will take upon him the care of all your Concernments.* You must be *Careful for nothing*, Phil. 4. 6. *He careth for you*, 1 Peter 5. 7. *Take no thought what you shall Eat or Drink, neither be of doubtful mind*, but rather *seek you the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.* Luke 12. 29. 31. Come you to this Holy Ordinance in any distress or trouble? Methinks you should go from it as *Hannah*, and your Countenance be no more sad. God will *number your Hairs*, and will take care that *nothing be lost.* John 6. 36. Luke 12. 7. He will take care of your *Names*, and bring *forth your Righteousness as the Light*, Psalm. 37. 5, 6. Of your *substance*, He will *give Meat to them that fear him, and be ever mindful of his Covenant*, Psalm. 111. 5. of your *Seed*, for he will be a God unto them, and will entail the blessing upon them,

Gen. 17. 7. He commands that your Widows and Fatherless Children should be left on him. He is by Covenant to look after their concerns, you need not to be solicitous. He is tender of you when he seems most to neglect you, as *Moses* sister that was secretly watching behind the Bush, and wistly looking on, to see what was done to the Child, though to the finders it seemed exposed to Famine, and Death in the Flags.

Art. VII. *That he will give you, or be himself to you instead of all Comforts. He will be a Sun and a Shield, and will give Grace and Glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*, Psal. 84. 11. Oh! the treasure in these words, *I am thy shield and exceeding great Reward!* I will undertake both for thy Protection and Provision. When evil assails thee, I will be a Shield to thee: When any good is wanting, I will be a Supply. Thou shalt have Children, or I will be better to thee than ten Children. Thou shalt have *Riches*, or I will be thy Store. Thou shalt have Friends if best for thee, or else I will be thy *Comforter* in thy solitude, thy Counsellor in thy distress. My Secrets, my Ear, and my Door shall be ever open to thee. *Mark* 10. 30. *He shall receive an hundred fold now in this time*; though he have not the things themselves, yet he shall have all these, and more than all in me. I will be *House*, and *Friend*, and *Father* to him, all in one. If you should have an hundred Candles burning in the Room, and should put out every one, and open the Window and let

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in the Sun, this would be better than the hundred Lights that were put out: So here though thou should be called to forsake all, 'twill be but as the letting the Cistern run, and open to the Fountain.

Artic. VIII. *That he will maintain you all your days in his service.* He will be your *Guide* even *unto Death*, Psal. 48. 14. Christians, whilst you have a day to live, God will stand by you. *He will never leave you nor forsake you*, Heb. 13. 5. *Surely Goodness and Mercy shall follow you all the days of your lives*, Psal. 23. 6. *And the Lord will never turn away from you to do you good.* Jer. 32. 40. Oh happy Covenant that the Lord seeleth to you.

Art. IX. *That when you come to Age, He will give the Kingdom to you.* God saith to the Believer here: *Thine is the Kingdom*: What ever is promised in the Covenant, is Sealed in the Sacrament, *Luke* 12. 32. *It is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom*, Luk. 22. 29. *I appoint unto you a Kingdom.* Mark, the Promise is pregnant with a *Kingdom*. 'Tis no less than a Crown, a *Kingdom*, that is here delivered unto you, *Luke* 19. 12. *A certain Nobleman went into a far Country, to receive to himself a Kingdom and to return*: This is the business you are come for hither. *To receive to your selves a Kingdom*: and so to return. Oh! methinks you should forget what ground you go upon, as you are going home, to think what you have received here: methinks you should go forth as *Haman* from the Banquet, joyful and with a glad Heart.

Sirs.

Sirs, do you know *what you are doing?* Why the Lord doth by these Signs give you *the Kingdom*; as a Man by the delivering unto you a *Turf*, or a *Key*, gives possession of an *House* or *Land*. Brethren have you ever read of the *Kingdom of Joy*, of *the Crown of Life*, of the *Robes of Righteousness*, of the Thrones of Glory? Why all this God here makes over to you: I tell you, Sirs, these are not bigg Words, nor cunningly devised Fables. God All-mighty is here come to certifie you of the reality of his Promises. As sure as you do now sit on your Seats, you shall shortly sit on your Thrones. As sure as you are now cloathed with flesh, so surely shall you be cloathed with Glory. Are you sure that you are now on Earth? So surely shall you be shortly in Heaven. The Lord intendeth you but for a very little while in this lower Region, you must dwell above; where Christ is, there you must be also. As sure as you now see a Crucified Christ, so surely shall you shortly see a Glorified Christ. The Lord Jesus doth anticipate his Sentence here, and calls to you, Guest, *Come ye Blessed enherit the Kingdom.* Take the writing, behold the Seals, here are the Conveyances of the Kingdom: The Donation is sure and full, unalterable, irrevocable.

Christians, do you believe? If you do, methinks you should be ravished: methinks you should be filled with joy unspeakable and full of Glory? But do you stagger at the Promise, through unbelief? Do you say, O it is too much and too great? why, how can this be? What! too great for God to make good? Thou dareſt

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not think so; But is too great for me to count upon. Why but man, dost thou not bear upon thee the *Marks of the Lord Jesus; whose Image and Superscription is this?* Doth not your very heart prize Christ above all the World? Hast thou not made a deliberate choice of him, for thy Head and Husband? Hast thou not entred into a solemn Contract with him, to be his for all times and conditions, and to love, honour and obey him, before all others to the death? And doth not thy heart stand to this choice? Hast not thou taken him with his Yoke, and with his Cross? And dost not thou in thy practice first seek the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof? And hast not thou chosen the way of the Kingdom? Art not thou in love with Holiness, and desirest Grace more than gold? Dost not thou prefer an holy and spiritual Life, before all the Grandeur of the world, and pleasure of the flesh? And all this not only for a fit or a flush, but in the settled frame and disposition of thy heart? Surely thou must wrong God and thy self, if thou deniest it to be thus with thee. Why, these are the *Marks of the Lord Jesus* upon thee, the sure marks: fear not, these cannot deceive thee: They evidence that thou art born of God, that thou art a Son, and so an Heir; and therefore mayest lay claim to the inheritance.

Come then, Beloved Christian, be of good comfort, why shouldest thou doubt? Thou hast the mark of the sheep, and therefore thy portion shall be at the Right hand, and thy Sentence among the Blessed. Well then, receive this Holy Sacrament as the pledge of all this. Go home and look over all these blessed Promises, and count

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them thine: Do not read them (as too often heretofore) as if they did not concern thee: Remember what God hath here promised under Hand and Seal to thee, and let not all be left behind thee, when thou goest hence; but let the remembrance, the fruit and sweet of this, abide upon thee whilst thou hast a day to live. Never forget what the Lord hath here spoken to thy Soul: make more of the Promises than ever in thy life before: Bless thy self in them: Remember how the Lord *delivered* thee the Promises: how he *sealed* to thy several Articles: how he sprinkled the Blood upon the Book of the Covenant, and gave it to thee, and said *This is the New Testament in my Blood*: Oh live henceforth a life of joy, and Faith, as a man that is elevated above the world. Do not live at the old, dull, and fleshful rate, carry it like a Believer, and in a word, walk as one that doth indeed take all for Truth that the Lord hath spoken to thee this day. Let that of the *Apostle* be close to all, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Having therefore these Promises, dearly Beloved let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit, perfecting Holiness in the fear of God.*

FINIS

These Books following are Printed for *Nevil Simmons*, at the *Princes-Arms*, in St. *Pauls* Church-yard.

1. THe Christian Directory, or Sum of Practical Theologie, and Cases of Conscience in 4 parts 1. Christian Ethicks, or private Duties. 2. Christian Oeconomicks or Family Duties. 3. Christian Ecclesiasticks, or Church Duties. 4. Christian Politicks, or Duties to our Rulers and Neighbours.

2. A Sermon of Judgment, Preached at *Pauls*, *London*, *Decemb.* 17. 1654. and now inlarged, in *twelves*.

3. Making light of Christ and Salvation, too oft the issue of Gospel-invitations, manifested in a Sermon Preached at *Laurence Jury*, in *London*, in *octavo*.

4. A Call to the Unconverted to Turn and Live, accept of mercy, while mercy may be had, as ever they would find mercy in the day of extremity; From the Living God: to be read in Families where any are unconverted, in *twelves*.

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6 Confirmation and Restauration, necessary means of Reformation and Reconciliation, in *octavo*.

7. Five Disputations of Church Government, in *quarto*.

8. A Key for Catholicks, to open the jugling of the Jesuits, and satisfie all that are truly willing to understand, whether the cause of *Romanists* or *Reformed* Churches be of God and to leave the Reader utterly unexcusable that after this will be a Papist, in *quarto*.

9. A

A treatise of Self-denial, in *quarto*.

11. His Holy Common-wealth, or Political aphorisms, opening the true Principles of Government *&c.* in *octavo*.

11. His Confession of Faith, *&c.* in *quarto*.

12. The Sermon of Repentance.

13. Of Right Rejoycing.

14. A Sermon of Faith before the King.

15. A Treatise of Death.

16. Short instructions for the Sicky, a *sheet*.

17. A Saint or a Bruit, *&c.* in *quarto*.

18. Self-acquaintance, in *octavo*.

19. Universal Concord, *&c.* in *octavo*.

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